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## A TOURNAMENT.

RAMBAUD OF VAQUIERAS.

I'LL tell you of our tournament, without circumlocution,  
What warriors bravest shone therein, and did most execution,  
Of who stood up, and who fell down, I'll say the simple truth ;  
To magnify in love or war, trust me, I'm not the youth.

The Lord of Baux began the fray — I err, it was his horse —  
A giant beast that overthrew whatever crossed his course :  
He backed against a noble count, and hurled him to the ground,  
And then, disabled with his kicks, fell twenty horses round !

Among the crowd your Dragonel conspicuous appeared,  
As under him his fiery barb most furious plunged and reared,  
'Twixt steed and rider to the last uncertain was the fray,  
For while the rider bit the dust, the former ran away.

Count Beausire was released the next from his unruly steed,  
And thus enabled one to mount more meet for martial deed.  
Then Barral of Marseilles, good knight, a fine career did make,  
Till, by a knight still better, he was flung into a brake.

Across the lists Mondragon's lord I saw most boldly prance,  
And overthrow a knight, himself, without breaking his lance ;  
A squire, whose steed was skin and bone, it was that dealt the blow ;  
Mondragon calmly raised himself, and sought a safer foe.

Mevallion's lord dashed bravely on, completely clad in mail ;  
The barb that bore him was a trifle larger than a quail ;  
His spear struck Nicholas on the helm ; good Nicholas laughed amain ;  
To him the shock was such as might have dealt a drop of rain.

The Prince of Orange boldly charged three warriors in a row,  
Because his horse would plunge that way, whether he would or no ;  
They fled, but if from man or horse to him it mattered nought,  
Since, chasing like a victor, he himself a victor thought.

Translated by John Rutherford.

## LOVE-FLOWERS.

OH ! who was watching when Love came by,  
When Love came here in the glad spring hours ?

The scarf was torn from his laughing eye,  
And he wore instead a wreath of flowers.

The wreath of flowers his head went round  
And about his eyes, as the scarf had been ;  
But in vain the flowery band was bound,  
For he peeped the flowers and leaves between.

He wore no quiver, he wore no bow,  
And innocent looked as a blinded boy ;  
With flowers about him, above, below,  
The spirit he seemed of spring and joy.

But here and there he let fall a flower,  
The cruel, the bright little blinded god ;  
And watching, I saw that hour by hour  
These blooms took root in the green spring sod.

And whoso plucks the flowers that grow  
From the blooms Love flung from his wreaths above,  
Though sweetest-seeming of blossoms they blow,  
His heart shall he hot with the madness of love. F. W. BOURDILLON.

## MARS.

THE wild wind wails across the wintry waste,  
The mallard whirls, shrill-crooning, from the sedge,  
The willows bending, shiver in the blast,  
That heraldeth the birth of boisterous March.

Hardy, yet tremulous, the violets blue  
Peep from their sheltering green ; the burnished blooms  
Of crocuses slow venture from the mould,  
And quivering bells of snow-drops, pure and white,  
Ring music on their stems, — breeze-melodies,  
Of rustling petals, subtle elfin-tunes,  
Felt but not heard. Brave robinet gives way,  
Sweet winter-minstrel, to spring's darling thrush.

Pink blush the almond-trees, with tender bloom,  
As glows the cheek of bashful white-veiled bride,  
Touched by her bridegroom's kiss. The helmed furze  
On yonder common, is a-yellowing  
With countless golden crests ; grey rabbits run  
In blithesome troop, from out the covert-side,  
And sport them in the sunshine. Once again  
The magic touch of Nature wakens Earth !

All The Year Round.

From The Fortnightly Review.

## TWO CHAPTERS ON THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV.

## CHAPTER I.

1661-1679.

THE reign of Louis XIV. was the culminating epoch in the history of the French Monarchy. What the age of Pericles was in the history of the Athenian Democracy, what the age of the Scipios was in the history of the Roman Republic, that was the reign of Louis XIV. in the history of the old Monarchy of France. The type of polity which that Monarchy embodied, the principles of government on which it reposed, or brought into play, in this reign attain their supreme expression and development. Before Louis XIV., the French Monarchy has evidently not attained its full stature; it is thwarted and limited by other forces in the State. After him, though unresisted from without, it manifests symptoms of decay from within. It rapidly declines; and totally disappears seventy-seven years after his death.

But it is not only the most conspicuous reign in the history of France—it is the most conspicuous reign in the history of Monarchy in general. Of the very many kings whom history mentions, who have striven to exalt the monarchical principle, none of them achieved a success remotely comparable to his. His two great predecessors in kingly ambition, Charles V. and Philip II., remained far behind him in this respect. They may have ruled over wider dominions, but they never attained the exceptional position of power and prestige which he enjoyed for more than half a century. They never were obeyed so submissively at home, nor so dreaded, and even respected, abroad. For Louis XIV. carried off that last reward of complete success, that he for a time silenced even envy, and turned it into admiration. We who can examine with cold scrutiny the make and composition of this Colossus of a French Monarchy; who can perceive how much the brass and clay in it exceeded the gold; who know how it afterwards fell with a resounding ruin, the last echoes of

which have scarcely died away, have difficulty in realizing the fascination it exercised upon contemporaries who witnessed its first setting up. Louis XIV.'s reign was the very triumph of commonplace greatness, of external magnificence and success, such as the vulgar among mankind can best and most sincerely appreciate. Had he been a great and profound ruler, had he considered with unselfish meditation the real interests of France, had he with wise insight discerned and followed the remote lines of progress along which the future of Europe was destined to move, it is lamentably probable that he would have been misunderstood in his lifetime and calumniated after his death. Louis XIV. was exposed to no such misconception. His qualities were on the surface, visible and comprehensible to all; and although none of them were brilliant, he had several which have a peculiarly impressive effect when displayed in an exalted station. He was indefatigably industrious; worked on an average eight hours a day for fifty-four years; had great tenacity of will; that kind of solid judgment which comes of slowness of brain, and withal a most majestic port and great dignity of manners. He had also as much kindness of nature as the very great can be expected to have; his temper was under severe control; and, in his earlier years at least, he had a moral apprehensiveness greater than the limitations of his intellect would have led one to expect. His conduct towards Molière was throughout truly noble, and the more so that he never intellectually appreciated Molière's real greatness. But he must have had great original fineness of tact, though it was in the end nearly extinguished by adulation and incense. His court was an extraordinary creation, and the greatest thing he achieved. He made it the microcosm of all that was most brilliant and prominent in France. Every order of merit was invited there, and received courteous welcome. To no circumstance did he so much owe his enduring popularity. By its means he impressed into his service that galaxy of great writers, the first and the last classic authors of France, whose

calm and serene lustre will forever illumine the epoch of his existence. It may even be admitted that his share in that lustre was not so accidental and undeserved as certain king-haters have supposed. That subtle critic, M. Ste. Beuve, thinks he can trace a marked rise even in Bossuet's style from the moment he became a courtier of Louis XIV. The king brought men together, placed them in a position where they were induced and urged to bring their talents to a focus. His Court was alternately a high-bred gala and a stately university. If we contrast his life with those of his predecessor and successor, with the dreary existence of Louis XIII. and the crapulous life-long debauch of Louis XV., we become sensible that the Fourteenth Louis was distinguished in no common degree; and when we further reflect that much of his home and all of his foreign policy was precisely adapted to flatter, in its deepest self-love, the national spirit of France, it will not be quite impossible to understand the long-continued reverberation of his fame.

But Louis XIV's reign has better titles than the adulations of courtiers and the eulogies of wits and poets to the attention of posterity. It marks one of the most memorable epochs in the annals of mankind. It stretches across history like a great mountain-range, separating ancient France from the France of modern times. On the farther slope are Catholicism and feudalism in their various stages of splendour and decay—the France of crusade and chivalry, of St. Louis and Bayard. On the hither side are free-thought, industry, and centralization—the France of Voltaire, Turgot, and Condorcet. When Louis came to the throne, the Thirty Years' War still wanted six years of its end, and the heat of theological strife was at its intensest glow. When he died, the religious temperature had cooled nearly to freezing-point, and a new vegetation of science and positive inquiry was overspreading the world. This amounts to saying that his reign covers the greatest epoch of mental transition through which the human mind has hitherto passed, excepting the transition

we are witnessing in the day which now is. We need but recall the names of the writers and thinkers who arose during Louis XIV.'s reign, and shed their seminal ideas broadcast upon the air, to realize how full a period it was, both of birth and decay; of the passing away of the old and the uprising of the new forms of thought. To mention only the greatest;—the following are among the chiefs who helped to transform the mental fabric of Europe in the age of Louis XIV.:—Descartes, Newton, Leibnitz, Locke, Boyle. Under these leaders, the first firm irreversible advance was made out of the dim twilight of theology into the clear dawn of positive and demonstrative science. Inferior to these founders of modern knowledge, but holding a high rank as contributors to the mental activity of the age, were Pascal, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Bayle. The result of their efforts was such a stride forward as has no parallel in the history of the human mind. One of the most curious and significant proofs of it was the spontaneous extinction of the belief in witchcraft among the cultivated classes of Europe, as our English historian of Rationalism has so judiciously pointed out. The superstition was not much attacked, and it was vigorously defended, yet it died a natural and quiet death from the changed moral climate of the world.

But the chief interest which the reign of Louis XIV. offers to the student of history has yet to be mentioned. It was the great turning-point in the history of the French people. The triumph of the Monarchical principle was so complete under him, independence and self-reliance were so effectually crushed, both in localities and individuals, that a permanent bent was given to the national mind—a habit of looking to the Government for all action and initiative permanently established. Before the reign of Louis XIV. it was a question which might fairly be considered undecided, whether the country would be able or not, willing or not, to co-operate with its rulers in the work of the Government and the reform of abuses. On more than one occasion such co-operation did not seem entirely im-



possible or improbable. The admirable wisdom and moderation shown by the Tiers-Etat in the States-General of 1614, the divers efforts of the Parliament of Paris to check extravagant expenditure, the vigorous struggles of the provincial assemblies to preserve some relic of their local liberties, seemed to promise that France would continue to advance under the leadership indeed of the Monarchy, yet still retaining in large measure the bright, free, independent spirit of old Gaul, the Gaul of Rabelais, Montaigne, and Joinville. After the reign of Louis XIV. such co-operation of the ruler and the ruled became impossible. The Government of France had become a machine depending upon the action of a single spring. Spontaneity in the population at large was extinct, and whatever there was to do must be done by the central authority. As long as the Government could correct abuses it was well; if it ceased to be equal to this task, they must go uncorrected. When at last the reform of secular and gigantic abuses presented itself with imperious urgency, the alternative before the Monarchy was either to carry the reform with a high hand or perish in the failure to do so. We know how signal the failure was, and could not help being, under the circumstances; and through having placed the Monarchy between these alternatives, it is no paradox to say that Louis XIV. was one of the most direct ancestors of the Great Revolution.

Nothing but special conditions in the politics both of Europe and of France, can explain this singular importance and prominence of Louis XIV.'s reign. And we find that both France and Europe were indeed in an exceptional position when he ascended the throne. The Continent of Europe, from one end to the other, was still bleeding and prostrate from the effects of the Thirty Years' War when the young Louis, in the sixteenth year of his age, was anointed king at Rheims. Although France had suffered terribly in that awful struggle, she had probably suffered less than any of the combatants, unless it be Sweden.

The great and so recently all-powerful

empire of Spain had entered that phase of rapid and virulent decay which has scarcely a parallel in the history of civilized nations; and which even the trials and horrors of the Thirty Years' War do not suffice to explain. Spain was succumbing to the clerical cancer of Jesuitism and the Inquisition, from which she has never recovered. Her power and prestige were at an end, and her voice had lost nearly all weight in the councils of Europe.

Germany was in a still worse condition, although from a less ignoble cause. She had been exposed to the whole fury of that most savage of all wars, and desolation unequalled since the days of Attila had visited her thriving towns, farms, and villages. It is a moderate computation which estimates her loss of human beings at three-quarters of the previous population. The destruction of property of all kinds was greater, especially under the head of horses and farm-stock. It has been reckoned that cows had disappeared to the extent of eighty-two per cent., goats at eighty-three per cent., and horses eighty-five per cent., while the race of sheep had entirely vanished. Two hundred years after the war Germany had not recovered from the losses she then sustained.\*

Italy was the geographical expression she was destined to be down to the present generation.

England, since the death of the great Elizabeth, had been withdrawn from European politics. First, through the incapacity and perverseness of her Stuart kings. Secondly, through the dark cloud of the Civil War, behind which she lay hidden from the gaze and even comprehension of Continental statesmen. Just recently, indeed, that cloud had been rent asunder, and revealed the astonishing spectacle of the great Cromwell seated on the throne of the Plantagenets and Tudors, and wielding their sceptre with a power and dignity to which the mightiest of them had never attained.

\* "Bilder aus der Deutschen Vergangenheit," von Gustav Freytag, vol. iii. ch. vi. Herr Freytag gives abundant evidence of the moderation of these astonishing estimates.

But the great Protector died in 1659, two years before Louis took the reins of government into his own hands.

Sweden, under the capricious Christina, and her successor Charles X., seemed fully occupied with her immediate neighbours, Poland and Denmark. She also had suffered some changes in her domestic policy, which considerably reduced her capacity for foreign intervention and influence.

The small but heroic republic of Holland was doubtless stronger and more illustrious than at any former period. But her strength was confined to one element; peace, commerce, and colonization were the objects of her policy; and she seemed to be threatened by no possible enemy but her jealous rival for maritime supremacy, Great Britain.

Such were the apparent guarantees of future peace, in the exhaustion or domestic preoccupation of the various European countries. The gates of the Temple of Janus could be shut, it would seem, with the profit and consent of all. No; there was one power in a position to open them. That was France.

The part played by France in the latter period of the war had been truly grand and noble. Taking up the interrupted work of the great Gustavus, she gave the finishing blow to the three great enemies of humanity and progress — Austria, Spain, and the Church; and her diplomacy in the Cabinet had admirably secured her triumphs in the field. The treaties of Munster and of the Pyrenees placed her in the highest position of moral prestige. She gained largely in territory; but her sacrifices had been great, and her gains were obtained at the expense of the hated Spaniard and Austrian. The leadership of the Continent devolved upon her. The peace of Western and Central Europe was in her keeping. Painful as was the condition of her overtaxed rural population, she was in relative opulence, as compared with her exhausted neighbours. The place vacated by the Empire and Spain, of general tyrant and browbeater of Europe, was open to her to fill if her young King were so minded. The world had not long to wait before it was made fully aware of his intentions. But this is not all.

It happened by a remarkable coincidence that precisely at this moment, when the condition of Europe was such that an aggressive policy on the part of France could be only with difficulty re-

sisted by her neighbours, that the power and prerogatives of the French Crown attained an expansion and pre-eminence which they had never enjoyed in the previous history of the country. The schemes and hopes of Philip the Fair, of Louis XI., of Henry IV., and of Richelieu had been realized at last; and their efforts to throw off the insolent coercion of the great feudal lords had been crowned with complete success. The Monarchy could hardly have conjectured how strong it had become, but for the abortive resistance and hostility it met with in the Fronde. The minority of a king in France had been from time immemorial a signal for the nobles to take the field in avowed enmity to the principle of national unity and centralization represented by the Monarchy. "The king is a minor, let us be major," was a current saying of the nobles. Never before had they had so fair a prospect of success; for never before had they had the alliance of the magistrates and civilians, of the Parliament, and other sovereign courts, who were indeed the chief civil servants of the Administration. These long-docile instruments of the Crown, which had indeed created them expressly as a counterpoise to feudal violence, were on this occasion the leaders in the resistance to the scandalous incapacity (to say the least) of the Regent and her minister, Mazarin, a great diplomatist but an incompetent administrator. The mob of Paris, rendered furious by capricious taxation, and the unwonted dearth of food and necessities, rose in insurrection, and was led by one of the ablest demagogues on record, the Cardinal de Retz. Princes of the blood and the most powerful nobles joined the movement; the two greatest generals in France or in the world, Condé and Turenne, offered it their swords. The Government, represented by Ann of Austria, was perhaps the feeblest ever called upon to meet such a crisis. Yet so strong was the Monarchical principle, that nobles, bourgeoisie, and populace, all combined, were unable to make permanent head against it. Indeed, the event clearly proved that nothing but the Monarchy was able to govern France, imperfect as its government might be. The nobles, in this their last effort to restore feudal anarchy, had shown themselves once more fierce, greedy, and blind, without a single political quality in them. And the men of the Robe were but little better; they were contending for their

own narrow interests. The populace was as ignorant as it was miserable, and quite incapable of producing leaders of its own. All the passions of a revolution were there, but the light of intellectual principles to direct them was wanting. Not yet could the crushed millions see how their galling fetters could be smitten off. The anguish of another century was needed for the elaboration of ideas which could give vision to the passions of revolt. And so the Fronde perished for lack of knowledge. The flames of insurrection which had shot up, forked and menacing, fell back underground, where they smouldered for four generations yet to come. The kingly power soared, single and supreme, over its prostrate foes. Long before Louis XIV. had shown any aptitude or disposition for authority, he was the object of adulation as cringing as was ever offered to a Roman emperor. When he returned from his consecration at Rheims, the Rector of the University of Paris, at the head of his professorial staff, addressed the young King in these words:—"We are so dazzled by the new splendour which surrounds your Majesty, that we are not ashamed to appear dumbfounded at the aspect of a light so brilliant and so extraordinary;" and at the foot of an engraving of the same date, he is in so many words called a demi-god.

It is evident that ample materials had been prepared for what the vulgar consider a great reign. Abundant opportunity for an insolent and aggressive foreign policy, owing to the condition of Europe. Security from remonstrance or check at home, owing to the condition of France. The temple is prepared for the deity; the priests stand by, ready to offer victims on the smoking altar; the incense is burning in anticipation of his advent. On the death of Mazarin, in 1661, he entered into his own.

Louis XIV. never forgot the trials and humiliations to which he and his mother had been subjected during the troubles of the Fronde. It has often been remarked, that rulers born in the purple have seldom shown much efficiency, unless they have been exposed to exceptional, and as it were artificial probations, during their youth. During the first eleven years of Louis's reign, incomparably the most creditable to him, we can trace unmistakably the influence of the wisdom and experience acquired in that period of anxiety and defeat. He then learned the value of money, and the su-

preme benefits of a full exchequer. He also acquired a thorough dread of subjection to ministers and favourites—a dread so deep, that it implied a consciousness of probable weakness on that side. As he went on in life, he to a great extent forgot both these valuable lessons, but their influence was never entirely effaced. To the astonishment of the courtiers, and even of his mother, he announced his intention of governing independently, and of looking after everything himself. They openly doubted his perseverance. "You do not know him," said Mazarin. "He will begin rather late, but he will go farther than most. There is enough stuff in him to make four kings and an honest man besides." His first measures were dictated less by great energy of initiative than by absolute necessity. The finances had fallen into such a chaos of jobbery and confusion, that the very existence of the Government depended upon a prompt and trenchant reform. It was Louis's rare good fortune to find beside him one of the most able and vigorous administrators who have ever lived—Colbert. He had the merit—not a small one in that age—of letting this great Minister invent and carry out the most daring and beneficial measures of reform, of which he assumed all the credit to himself. The first step was a vigorous attack on the gang of financial plunderers who, with Fouquet at their head, simply embezzled the bulk of the State revenues. The money-lenders not only obtained the most usurious interest for their loans, but actually held in mortgage the most productive sources of the national taxation; and, not content with that, they bought up, at ten per cent. of their nominal value, an enormous amount of discredited bills, issued by the Government in the time of the Fronde, which they forced the Treasury to pay off at par; and this was done with the very money they had just before advanced to the Government. Such barefaced plunder could not be endured, and Colbert was the last man to endure it. He not only repressed speculation, but introduced a number of practical improvements in the distribution, and especially in the mode of levying the taxes. So imperfect were the arrangements connected with the latter, that it was estimated that of eighty-four millions paid by the people, only thirty-two millions entered into the coffers of the State. The almost instantaneous effects of Colbert's measures—

the yawning deficit was changed into a surplus of forty-five millions in less than two years — showed how gross and flagrant had been the malversation preceding. Far more difficult, and far nobler in the order of constructive statesmanship, were his vast schemes to endow France with manufactures, with a commercial and belligerent navy, with colonies, besides his manifold reforms in the internal administration — tariffs and customs between neighbouring provinces of France; the great work of the Languedoc Canal; in fact in every part and province of government. His success was various,\* but in some cases really stupendous. His creation of a navy almost surpasses belief. In 1661, when he first became free to act, France possessed only thirty vessels of war of all sizes. At the peace of Nimeguen, in 1678, she had acquired a fleet of one hundred and twenty ships; and in 1683 she had got a fleet of one hundred and seventy-six vessels; and the increase was quite as great in the size and armament of the individual ships as in their number. A perfect giant of administration, Colbert found no labour too great for his energies, and worked with unflagging energy sixteen hours a day for twenty-two years. It is melancholy to be forced to add that all this toil was as good as thrown away, and that the strong man went broken-hearted to the grave, through seeing too clearly that he had laboured in vain for an ungrateful egotist. His great visions of a prosperous France, increasing in wealth and contentment, were blighted; and he closed his eyes upon scenes of improvidence and waste more injurious to the country than the financial robbery which he had combated in his early days. The Government was not plundered as it had been, but itself was exhausting the very springs of wealth by its impoverishment of the people. Boisguillebert, writing in 1693, only fifteen years after Colbert's death, estimated the productive powers of France to have diminished by one-half in the previous thirty years. It seems, indeed, probable that the almost magical rapidity and effect of Colbert's early reforms turned Louis XIV.'s head,

and that he was convinced that it only depended on his good pleasure to renew them to obtain the same result. He never found, as he never deserved to find, another Colbert; and he stumbled onwards in ever deeper ruin to his disastrous end.

But these evil days are as yet far off. A handsome young king, after a creditable and quite unexpected attention to the toils of empire, may well allow himself a little relaxation, and Louis's relaxations were ample and magnificent. Balls, masks, and scenic splendours which last seven days at a time, assure enraptured courtiers that the winter of their discontent is at last over, and that a king indeed has come to bless them. More important still were the hunting parties at Compiègne, and the moonlit wanderings in the leafy dimness of Fontainebleau forest. The young king is married and religious, — at least hears mass with unflagging regularity every day of his life, — yet he can truthfully say, "Mais, Madame, après tout je ne suis pas un ange;" and he is besieged by dames and demoiselles who are pining to hear him make the tender avowal. He makes it to one Galatea after another, with no awkward modesty but with the frank directness which becomes a king whose device is the sun. The austere Clio passes, or should pass, by such scenes with averted eyes; one she cannot overlook, for it occurs directly in her path. The Marquise de Montespan belongs to history.

Athenais de Mortemart came of one of the noblest families of Poitou. She was the wife of the Marquis de Montespan, twenty-six years of age, and in the full splendour of an ample and rather gorgeous beauty. She had the famous wit of her kindred, brilliant and hard as steel. When her chariot — heavy and spacious as a waggon — runs over and crushes a poor cripple on the Pont Neuf, she rallies with lively jocosity her companions who manifest distress and feeling at the accident. She came to Court with the avowed design of storming the not very strongly fortified fortress of Louis's heart. Her success was commensurate with her courage. He surrendered at discretion. But there was a third person who showed an eccentric dissatisfaction at these gallant achievements — M. de Montespan, her husband. When he discovered how matters really lay, he forgot himself so far as to slap his wife's face, put on mourning, and went about Paris in his coach with four horns stuck at the

\* The unity and centralization of France, in the seventeenth century have often been supposed greater than they really were. The successful resistance made to Colbert's tariff of 1664 is one proof among many others. For a good account of the essential weakness of the French Monarchy see "Une Province sous Louis XIV.," par A. Thomas; and for all that concerns Colbert, the excellent work of M. Clement, "Histoire de Colbert."



corners. Such unseemly conduct was promptly punished, and he was banished to his lands in the Pyrenees. Then the Montespan expanded into a Sultana, to whom every knee was bowed. The ministers were summoned to council in her boudoir, and even the imperious Louvois was reduced to servitude. Once when seven marshals were created, she coolly took the list out of the King's pocket, and, after inspecting it, said, "Then my brother, Vivonne, is not amongst them?" The King and Louvois stammered, looked at each other, and finished by saying it was an oversight, and her brother Vivonne was nominated eighth marshal. So it went on for some years, till on a particular occasion Madame de Montespan was refused absolution by a priest of Versailles. We are not told why this mishap had not occurred before. But so it was; owing to the scruples of a subaltern priest the haughty favourite could not exhibit an edifying spectacle of devotion by communicating at Easter amid the splendid dames and cavaliers of Versailles. She complained to the King, who sent for the curé of the parish. The curé declared that the priest had only done his duty. The King was quite struck with such harmony of opinion, and announced with magnanimity he would condemn neither the curé nor the priest until he had consulted the Duc de Montausier and M. de Condom—that is to say, the great Bossuet. They both agreed with the curé that the priest had only done his duty, and the bishop spoke with such force and reasoned with such eloquence "of glory and religion," that the King rose, seized M. de Montausier's hand, and, squeezing it, with a sob of emotion said, "I will see her no more."

There was some rashness in this assertion, and besides Madame de Montespan had not been consulted. Bossuet was deputed to the ungrateful task of persuading the deposed mistress to accept her disgrace in a Christian spirit. Every night he travelled post from Versailles to Paris to have long interviews with her. She overwhelmed him with reproaches, told him it was through *his* pride that she was driven forth, and that he wished to make himself master of the King's mind for his own purposes. Finding anger unavailing she turned to caresses, tried to dazzle him with the glory of a cardinal's hat, and the prospect of the highest preferment in the Church. Poor Bossuet's nerves were sorely tried by the hard labour of his position. He had al-

ternately to bear the assaults of a sharp-tongued woman, and to strengthen the unstable resolution of her not wholly penitent lover. Not that he was insensible to the grandeur of the part he was called upon to play. He confirmed himself by reflecting on the great example of St. Ambrose and Theodosius: begged his friends to pray for him that his faith might not falter, and rebuked the royal sinner (in letters he was commanded to write) with subtle flatteries and complimentary reproaches.

It may be imagined what interest the idle throng of courtiers, who had little to do but dress themselves and observe the King, took in this business. The softer souls with a turn for devotion believed, or pretended to believe, that a striking miracle of divine grace was about to be wrought. The more experienced shook their heads with smiling scepticism. Although Madame de Montespan seemed resigned to her fate, it certainly *was* a suspicious circumstance that in her near retreat at Clagny she was able to display a state and dispose of funds such as she had never done in the days of her highest favour. She had the King's taste for building, and laying out gardens, and she indulged it to an extent which exceeded even Louis's prodigality. Twelve hundred workmen were employed on her new château, and Le Nôtre, the landscape gardener, surpassed himself in ingenious novelties. Madame de Sévigné, writing to her daughter, could only compare the Montespan to Dido watching the rising walls of Carthage. Of course these things cost money, and money at the moment was being borrowed at ruinous interest, for the war with Holland was at its height. But what was Colbert there for, working sixteen hours a day, except for that very purpose of finding money? He received the repeated commands of the King to supply whatever the lady might ask for—also that Madame Colbert should do her best to amuse her. Colbert was used to these little services connected with the King's mistresses. He had been sent after the fugitive Lavallière when she fled to Chaillot, and he will be shortly requested to bring M. de Montespan to reason, when that crotchety and obstreperous husband comes to Paris and misbehaves himself as usual. "Monsieur Colbert," writes the King, "I am told that Montespan permits himself to use indiscreet language. He is a madman whom you will do me the pleasure to follow up



closely. . . . I know that Montespan has threatened to see his wife, and as he is quite capable of doing such a thing, and the results would be objectionable, I again trust to you that he does not speak. Don't forget this ; and above all see that he leaves Paris as soon as possible." So he obeyed his master, and supplied Madame with money at her discretion. But Louis had now returned from one of his military promenades, which he seriously thought were campaigns. Was this cruel and absolute separation necessary as St. Ambrose had exacted ? Far more humane was Père La Chaise (Chaise de Commodité, as Madame de Montespan ungratefully called him afterwards), who opined that they might surely meet and see each other, provided it were done in a Christian manner. Divine grace is so strong when it is present, as was indeed seen when, to avoid the faintest whisper of scandal, it was arranged that the King and the Montespan should meet in Madame's de Richelieu's salon, surrounded by the stateliest dames, perfect dragons of virtue. The King and the Marquise had naturally much to say after so long a separation, and a retired window was most convenient for intimate conversation. The talk was very intimate, and some persons noticed tears. When the dialogue was over, Louis and Madame de Montespan made a profound reverence to the venerable ladies, and passed into an adjoining apartment. The haughty mistress returned to power more insolent than ever for her temporary defeat ; and Lully's music and Quinault's verse celebrated in the opera of *Theseus* the gratifying event. Venus and Mars declared Louis was equally precious to them both, and that

Tout doit l'aimer,  
Tout doit le craindre.

Whatever doubt there might be as regarded his claims to universal love, he soon showed he could inspire something like universal fear. Just as he had seized the first opportunity at home to convince his people that he meant to be supreme, so in his dealings with foreign powers he at once adopted a tone of haughtiness which produced a marked effect ; and it must be added, that impartial history will not condemn him as having in these early years exceeded the limits of an honourable jealousy for the dignity of his crown. He first came across Spain, whose ambassador had, in a disgraceful riot in the streets of London, shamefully maltreated

his envoy. Louis exacted and obtained the amplest apologies from the King of Spain, who was his own father-in-law. He next refused, with great warmth and dignity, the insulting pretension of England to have her flag saluted (by the ships of other nations lowering their topsails to it), not only in British waters but on the ocean. Again, he compelled the Pope to offer the most submissive excuses for an indignity to which the French Ambassador had been subjected at Rome. If the peremptoriness with which he stood upon his rights in each of these cases might lead men to suspect that he nourished a pride but slightly removed from insolence, still he was not the aggressor. The contingent of six thousand men which he sent to assist the Emperor against the Turks, was again a step of some vigour, but in nowise overbearing. And his support of the Dutch against England in 1665 was an act of undoubtedly good policy, and consonant with the best traditions of Richelieu and Mazarin. But here his moderation comes to an end ; for the rest of his reign he was as insolent as he could be, and as his neighbours would let him.

His first breach of public faith was his attack on the Spanish Netherlands, under colour of certain pretended rights of the Queen, his wife — the Infanta Marie Thérèse ; although he had renounced all claims in her name at his marriage. This aggression was followed by his famous campaign in the Low Countries, when Franche Comté was overrun and conquered in fifteen days. He was stopped by the celebrated Triple Alliance in mid career. He had not yet been intoxicated by success and vanity ; Colbert's influence, always exerted on the side of peace, was at its height ; the menacing attitude of Holland, England, and Sweden awed him, and he drew back. His pride was deeply wounded, and he revolved deep and savage schemes of revenge. Not on England, whose abject sovereign he knew could be had whenever he chose to buy him, but on the heroic little Republic which had dared to cross his victorious path. His mingled contempt and rage against Holland were indeed instinctive, spontaneous, and in the nature of things. Holland was the living, triumphant incarnation of the two things he hated most — the principle of liberty in politics, and the principle of free inquiry in religion. With a passion too deep for hurry or carelessness, he made his preparations. The army was

submitted to a complete reorganization. A change in the weapons of the infantry was effected, which was as momentous in its day as the introduction of the breech-loading rifle in ours. The old inefficient firelock was replaced by the flint musket, and the rapidity and certainty of fire vastly increased. The undisciplined independence of the officers commanding regiments and companies was suppressed by the rigorous and methodical Colonel Martinet, whose name has remained in other armies besides that of France as a synonym of punctilious exactitude.\* The means of offence being thus secured, the next step was to remove the political difficulties which stood in the way of Louis's schemes; that is to dissolve Sir W. Temple's diplomatic masterpiece, the Triple Alliance. The effeminate Charles II. was bought over by a large sum of money, and the present of a pretty French mistress. Sweden also received a subsidy, and her schemes of aggrandizement on the German continent were encouraged. Meanwhile, the illustrious man who ruled Holland showed that kind of weakness which good men often do in the presence of the unscrupulous and wicked. John de Witt could not be convinced of the reality of Louis's nefarious designs. France had ever been Holland's best friend, and he could not believe that the policy of Henry IV., of Richelieu, and Mazarin would be suddenly reversed by the young King of France. He tried negotiations in which he was amused by Louis so long as it suited the latter's purpose. At last, when the King's preparations were complete, he threw off the mask, and insultingly told the Dutch that it was not for hucksters like them, and usurpers of authority not theirs, to meddle with such high matters. Then commenced one of the brightest pages in the history of national heroism. At first the Dutch were overwhelmed; town after town capitulated without a blow. It seemed as if the United Provinces were going to be subdued, as Franche Comté had been five years before. But Louis XIV. had been too much intoxicated by that pride which goes before a fall, to retain any clearness of head, if indeed he ever had any in military matters. The great Condé, with his keen eye for attack, at once suggested one of those tiger springs for which he was unequalled among commanders. Seeing the dismay

of the Dutch, he advised a rapid dash with six thousand horse on Amsterdam. It is nearly certain, if this advice had been followed, that the little commonwealth, so precious to Europe, would have been extinguished; and that that scheme, born of heroic despair, of transferring to Batavia, "under new stars and amid a strange vegetation," the treasure of freedom and valour ruined in its old home by the Sardanapalus of Versailles might have been put in execution. But it was not to be. Vigilant as Louis had been in preparation, he now seemed to be as careless or incompetent in execution. Not only he neglected the advice of his best general, and wasted time; but he did his best to drive his adversaries to despair, and the resistance which comes of despair. They were told by proclamation that "the towns which should try to resist the forces of his Majesty by opening the dykes, or by any other means, would be *punished* with the utmost rigour; and when the frost should have opened roads in all directions, his Majesty would give no sort of quarter to the inhabitants of the said towns, but would give orders that their goods should be plundered and their houses burnt." The Dutch envoys, headed by De Groot, son of the illustrious Grotius, came to the King's camp to know on what terms he would make peace. They were refused audience by the theatrical warrior, and told not to return except armed with full powers to make any concessions he might dictate. Then the "hucksters" of Amsterdam resolved on a deed of daring which is one of the most exalted among "the high traditions of the world." They opened the sluices and submerged the whole country under water. Still their position was almost desperate, as the winter frosts were nearly certain to restore a firm foothold to the invader. They came again suing for peace, offering Maëstricht, the Rhine fortresses, the whole of Brabant, the whole of Dutch Flanders, and an indemnity of ten millions. This was proffering more than Henry IV., Richelieu, or Mazarin, had ever hoped for. These terms were refused, and the refusal carried with it practically the rejection of Belgium, which could not fail to be soon absorbed when thus surrounded by French possessions.\* But Louis met these offers with

\* "Histoire de Louvois," par Camille Rousset, vol. I. p. 163.

\* Louis XIV. became aware of the blunder he committed in not closing with the offers of the Dutch. The reasons he gives for his refusal are so confused that it is difficult to guess their meaning. They were probably

the spirit of an Attila. He insisted on the concession of Southern Gueldres and the island of Bommel, twenty-four millions of indemnity, the endowment of the Catholic religion, and an extraordinary annual embassy charged to present his Majesty with a gold medal which should set forth how the Dutch owed to him the conservation of their liberties. Such vindictive cruelty makes the mind run forward and dwell with a glow of satisfied justice on the bitter days of retaliation and revenge which in a future, still thirty years off, will humble the proud and pitiless oppressor in the dust; when he shall be a suppliant, and a suppliant in vain, at the feet of the haughty victors of Blenheim, Ramillies, and Oudenarde.

But Louis's mad career of triumph was gradually being brought to a close. He had before him not only the waste of waters, but the iron will and unconquerable tenacity of the young Prince of Orange, "who needed neither hope to make him dare, nor success to make him persevere."\* Gradually the threatened neighbours of France gathered together and against her King. Charles II. was forced to recede from the French alliance by his Parliament in 1674. The military massacre went on, indeed, for some years longer in Germany and the Netherlands; but the Dutch Republic was saved, and peace ratified by the treaty of Nimègue.

It may be doubted whether Europe has fully realized the greatness of the peril she so narrowly escaped on this occasion. The extinction of political and mental freedom, which would have followed the extinction of the Dutch Republic, would have been one of the most disastrous defeats of the cause of liberty and enlightenment possible in the then condition of the world. To borrow an image from the savage criminal legislation of the time, it would have been the tearing out by the roots of the tongue of Europe and civilization. The free presses of Holland gave voice to the stifled thought and agony of mankind. And they were the only free presses in the world. But Holland was not only the greatest book mart of Europe, it was

emphatically the home of thinkers and the birthplace of ideas. How precious it was to human welfare was shown by the hasty exultation of the Court of Rome over what seemed its approaching ruin. And, indeed, it suffices but to recall a few dates to realize what an eclipse would have darkened European thought had Louis's invasion of Holland left him master of the country. The two men then living to whose genius and courage the modern spirit of mental emancipation and toleration owes its first and most arduous victories were Pierre Bayle and John Locke. And it is beyond dispute, that if the French King had worked his will on Holland, neither of them would have been able to accomplish the task they did achieve under the protection of Dutch freedom. They both were forced to seek refuge in Holland from the bigotry which hunted them down in their respective countries. All the works of Bayle were published in Holland, and some of the earliest of Locke's writings appeared there also; and if the remainder saw the light afterwards in England, it is only because the Dutch, by saving their own freedom, were the means of saving that of England as well. Not one of the works of either Bayle or Locke, neither the "*Pensées sur la Comète*," nor the "*Commentaire Philosophique*," nor the immortal "*Critical Dictionary*," nor the letters on "*Toleration*," nor on "*Civil Government*," nor that creative impulse of speculative thought for a hundred years to come, the "*Essay on the Human Understanding*" would have appeared if Louis had established his proconsuls in the Dutch provinces, and garrisoned their towns with his musketeers and dragoons. There is a futile, almost an immortal saying, "*Il n'y a pas d'homme nécessaire*," meaning, in some confused way, to say, that if one man is cut off and prevented from doing the work, another will forthwith appear capable and willing to do it. People who hold this view would most likely say in the present case that if Locke and Bayle been hindered from writing, even if the Dutch free press had been extinguished, still the "spirit of the age," the "march of intellect," or some other equally definite and scientific entity, would have made it all right, and the world would have been none the worse off. Such reflections imply but feeble gratitude to the noble organs of human progress. What is meant when it is said that humanity can spare, without missing them, its best

not meant to be intelligible, as they were certainly not sincere. He afterwards gave the real reason in this haughty fashion: "Posterity will believe me in these remarks or not as it likes, or ascribe my refusal to my ambition, and to my desire to revenge myself for the insults I had received from the Dutch. I will not justify myself before her. Ambition and glory are always excusable in a Prince, and especially in a young Prince, and one so well treated as I had been by Fortune." — Rousset, vol. i. p. 379.

\* These words are M. Mignet's.

leaders? Is it meant that it is competent to any one to take their place at a moment's warning, and that if Bayle had not written his "Critical Dictionary," and if Locke had not written his Essay, somebody else would? Perhaps the believers in the march of intellect—for even a mob cannot march along a turnpike road without some leadership—are not prepared to go so far as that. Time, they will say, would have brought forth other minds of equal or similar quality, which, finding the same unresolved problems before them, would have attacked and resolved them; so that the same advance would have been made, only the names prominently connected with the advance would have been different, and progress would be equally certain in either case. The answer to this is, that it is simply untrue. For, granting for sake of argument—though in truth it is a most unwarrantable assumption—that Bayles and Lockes, or their equals, are fruits that come like pears and apples in due season, still the very fact that we have to wait for their successors to do the work they were prevented from doing, causes the loss of a stage, a delay, and who can tell how long a delay? And again the delay, has it had no influence; has it left the problem in the same position, or not rather greatly increased its difficulty? So that not equal but greater men are required to solve it; not men as courageous, but more courageous are required to face it. Those who say that Truth is great and will prevail, overlook the fact that Truth can only prevail if there are men forthcoming capable of finding it, and brave enough to assert it. Have they never heard of societies where, in consequence of steady unflinching repression of such men, the race has at last died out? Have they not heard of the history of Spain? The country which produced Ximenes, Cervantes, and Servetus cannot be denied intellectual ardour and initiative. Then how came it that Spanish intellect has not a single name to show on the muster-roll of human emancipators? It seems likely, to say the least, that a careful extirpation of seminal minds, a careful suppression, as soon as they appear, of seminal ideas, will have the effect of causing them to cease to exist: and that the march of intellect and progress of the species are not quite matters of course, whether interfered with or not. It is, perhaps, replied that

France and Europe were in no danger of falling under the yoke of anything resembling the Spanish Inquisition. Who can say there was no danger of such a horror? A French Inquisition would have differed from the Spanish in detail; might have been at the service of the Crown rather than of the Church; might have condemned opinions tolerated at Rome, and *vice versa*. But it would not, therefore, have been a less stifling oppressor of the human mind. Indeed, the severity of Louis's censorship did become an Inquisition. And why was it not permanently successful? Mainly, one can fearlessly answer, because Holland remained free, to assail the citadel of superstition and tyranny with a ceaseless storm of intellectual fire. Because Bayle, Basnage, Jurieu, Jaquelot, Leclerc, L'Enfant, and a host more, *did* publish their books, which penetrated into France and undermined the despot's power, do what he would. Because Locke found a refuge there from the fury of Tory and Jesuitical malignity. Again it must be repeated, that on the safety of Dutch liberty the future of English liberty was dependent. At least, no one can maintain that if Holland had been annihilated in 1672, the English revolution could have occurred in the form and at the time it did. It is far more probable it would never have occurred at all, and that Louis, who had invited Spain, in the early years of his reign, to a joint crusade against England, would, after the destruction of Dutch independence, have been able, in alliance with the malignant Stuart, to overcome the liberties of this country also. Then, we may ask, what would have become of the "Principia" of Isaac Newton? For although that book was published in 1687, just one year before James's expulsion, we may be quite certain that those two deadly enemies of reason, Louis and James, would have been much farther advanced in their campaign against the freedom of mankind had Holland disappeared fifteen years before. It can hardly be doubted that James II., who, even in that great crisis of his fortune, found time to quarrel with Cambridge, and to attempt to force a Benedictine monk on the University against the statutes, would have consulted many monks about the publication of such a book, and that the learned members of his Church would probably have had scruples with regard to an "hypothesis" which, three-quarters of a cen-



tury afterwards, they carefully abstained from declaring to be true.\* The memorable expansion of thought which, in the reigns of Queen Anne and the first George, made England the wonder and model of the free spirits of other nations, and the high school in which Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Lessing learned to see the wide horizons of the future and the distant peaks of knowledge, radiant with inspiration to those who could think and dare—all this must have been lost to humanity but for the noble stand made by little Holland in 1672. The conditions of the time had made her a Thermopylæ of thought, and her fate was happier, but in no degree less glorious, than that of Leonidas and his band of Spartans.

With the Peace of Nimeguen the earlier and nobler portion of Louis XIV.'s reign came to a close. The remaining period of disaster and reaction will be treated of in the following number.

JAMES COTTER MORISON.

\* The editors, Le Sueur and Jacquier, of the Order of Minims, declared, in their reprint of the "Principia," published in 1760, that they were playing a part which did not belong to them in admitting the motion of the earth. "Hinc alienam coacti sumus gerere personam." They add, "Ceterum, latis a summis Pontificibus contra telluris motum decretis nos obsequi profitemur!"

From Blackwood's Magazine.

## THE STORY OF VALENTINE; AND HIS BROTHER.

### CHAPTER VII.

"RICHARD, there is one disagreeable subject which, as you said nothing about it, I have avoided as long as possible; but I must speak now, before you go."

Lady Eskside had led her son out upon the terrace the evening before he was to leave. She was dressed for dinner in her black satin gown, with a lace cap and stomacher, which even his fastidious eye approved. She had come to the age when little change of costume is possible. Sometimes she wore velvet instead of satin, but that was about all the variety she made, and her lace was her only vanity. She had a crimson Indian scarf thrown over her head and shoulders. Her erect old figure was still as trim, and her step as springy, as any girl's. She was the picture of an old lady, everybody allowed;—and it was true she was old—yet full of an unquenchable youth. She had taken her son by the arm in the interval before dinner, and led him out into the open air to speak to him. Per-

haps it was an inopportune moment; but it was a subject for which she felt a few minutes were enough, as it could not but be painful to both.

"Well, mother," he said, with a tone of resignation. He was going next day, which gave him strength to bear this ordeal, whatever its *motif* might be.

"I have said nothing to you—indeed, indeed, I have wished to say nothing—about—Richard, my dear boy, listen to me with patience—I will not keep you long—about—Val's mother—your wife."

"What about her?" said Richard, with harsh brevity. He made a movement almost as if to throw off his mother's arm.

"My dear, you must not think this subject is less disagreeable to me than to you. Nothing has been said about her for a long time—"

"And why should anything be said about her?" said Richard. "In such a hopeless business, what is the advantage of discussion? She has chosen her path in life, which is not the same as mine."

His soft and gentle face set into a harsh rigidity: it grew stern, almost severe. "Come indoors, mother—the evening gets cold," he added, after a pause.

"Just a word, Richard—just one word! Do you not see a trace of something different rising in her? She has brought back your boy: I suppose she thinks, poor thing, that it is just she should have one of them—"

"Mother," said Richard, "I am astonished at your charity. You say, poor thing. Do you remember that she has ruined your son's life?"

Lady Eskside made no answer. She looked at him wistfully, with an evident repression of something that rose to her lips.

"She has been my curse," said Richard, vehemently. "For God's sake, if she will leave us alone, let us leave her alone. She has made my life a desert. Is it choice, do you think, that makes me an outcast from my own country? that shuts me out of everything your son and my father's son ought to have been? Why cannot I take my proper place in society—my natural place? You know well enough what the answer is—her, only her. She has been my ruin: she is the curse of my life."

He spoke almost with passion, growing not red but white in the intensity of his feelings. Lady Eskside looked at him, kept looking at him, with a face in which



sympathy shone—along with some other expression not so easy to be defined.

"Richard," she said, in a low voice, "all you say is true—who can know it better than I do? but oh, my dear, mind! she could have had no power on your life, if you had not given it to her—of your free will."

"So, then, it is I alone who am to blame?" said Richard, with a laugh, which was half rage and half scorn. "I might have known that was what you were sure to say."

"Yes, you might have known it," said Lady Eskside—"for nothing, I hope, will ever shut my mind to justice; but not because I am in the habit of reproaching you, Richard—for that I never did, even when you had made my heart sore; but we need not quarrel about it, you and me. What I want to know is, if you do not see now the still greater importance of getting some hold upon her; for Valentine's—for all our sakes?"

"You will never get a hold upon her; it is folly to dream of it. She is beyond your reach, or that of any reasonable creature. Mother, come in—the bell must have rung for dinner."

"I have written to the man we employed before," said Lady Eskside, hurriedly. "This was what I wanted to say. Do not stare at me, Richard! I will not put up with it. I must do my duty as I see it, and whatever comes of it. I have given him all the particulars I could, and told him to try every means, and lose no time. Her heart must be soft after giving up her child."

"So," said Richard, with a quivering pale smile, "you consult me what should be done after all the steps have been taken. This is kind! You have taken care to provide for my domestic comfort, mother—"

"If we should find her—which God grant!—I will take charge of her," said Lady Eskside, with a flush of resentment. "Neither your comfort nor your pride shall be interfered with—never fear."

"You are most considerate, mother," said Richard. "Your house, then, is to be finally closed to me, after the effort I have made to revisit it? Well, after all, I suppose the Palazzo Graziani suits best."

"You are cruel to say so, Richard," said his mother. Tears came quickly to her bright old eyes; but at that moment Lord Eskside looked out from one of the drawing-room windows, and stayed the further progress of the quarrel.

"What are you two doing there, phlanderer like a lad and a lass?" said the old lord. "Richard, bring your mother in; she'll catch cold. There's a heavy dew falling, though it's a fine night."

"It is my mother who insists on staying out in the night air, which I disapprove of," said Richard. "The Italians have a prejudice on the subject of sunset. They think it the most dangerous hour of the day. I am so much of an Italian now—and likely to be more so—that I have taken up their ideas—at least so far as sunset is concerned."

"So much an Italian—and likely to be more so!—I hope not, I hope not, Richard," said his father. "After this good beginning you have made, it will be hard upon your poor mother and me if we cannot tempt you home."

"Or drive me away forever," said Richard, so low that his mother only heard him. She grasped his arm with a sudden vehemence of mingled love and anger, which for the moment startled him, and then dropped it, and stepped in through the window, letting the subject drop altogether. She was unusually bright at dinner, excited, as it seemed, by the sharp little encounter she had just had, which had stirred up all her powers. Lord Eskside, who was not of a fanciful nature, and whose moods did not change so quickly, regarded her with some suspicion. He was himself depressed by his son's approaching departure, and somewhat disposed to be angry, as he generally was when depressed.

"You must have been saying something to your mother to raise her spirits," he said, after one or two ineffectual attempts to subdue her—when Richard and he were left to their claret.

"Not I, sir," said Richard, "on the contrary; my mother has ideas with which I disagree entirely."

"Ay, boy, to be sure," said the old lord, "she was saying something to me. Then it was opposition, and not satisfaction as I thought? You see, Richard, women have their own ways of thinking. We cannot always follow their reasoning; but in the main your mother's perhaps right."

And having said this, in mild backing up of his wife's bolder suggestions, Lord Eskside changed the subject and spoke of the property, and of new leases he was granting, and the improvement of the estate.

"There is a great deal of land about Lasswade that might be feued very ad-

vantageously — but I would not do it without ascertaining your feeling on the subject, Richard. It can't make much difference in my time; but in the course of nature that time can't be very long."

"I wish it might be a hundred years," said Richard, with no false sentiment; for indeed, apart from natural affection, to be Lord Eskside and live up here in the paternal chateau among the woods did not charm his imagination much.

"That is all very pleasant for you to say," said his father, receiving and dismissing the compliment with a wave of his hand; "but, as I say, in the course of nature my time must be but short. There is just the question about the amenities upon which every man has his own opinion —"

"The — what did you say?" asked Richard, puzzled.

"The amenities of the place. It is true the village is not visible from the house, but if in the future you were to find the new houses that might be built an eyesore —"

"That is entirely a British notion," Richard answered, with a smile; "I think great part of the beauty in Italy is from the universal life you see everywhere — villages climbing up every hillside. No; I have no English prejudices on that point."

"I don't know about it being an English prejudice," said Lord Eskside, who never forgot the distinction between English and Scotch, as his son invariably did. "Then you don't object to feuing? Willie Maitland will be a proud man. He has told me often I might add a thousand a-year to the income of the property by judicious feus. They will be taken up by all kind of shopkeeper bodies, retired tradesmen, and the like — a consideration which gives me little trouble, Richard, but may perhaps act upon you. No? Well, you're a philosopher: they're bad at an election; they're totally beyond your control — unless, indeed, your mother and I were to put ourselves out of our way to visit and make of them; but we would want a strong inducement for that."

Here Lord Eskside looked at his son with a look of mild entreaty, not saying anything; and Richard knew his father well enough to comprehend.

"You must not think of that, sir, — indeed you must not. Am I in a position to be set up before the county, and have every fact of my life brought up against me? No, father, anything else you like

— but let me stay among strangers, where the circumstances of my existence need not be inquired into."

"I don't know that you have anything to be ashamed of," said Lord Eskside, with a husky voice.

"Anyhow, I cannot offer myself as a subject to be discussed by all the world," said Richard. Courage, he said to himself — to-morrow and all this will be over! He made a strenuous effort to be patient, strengthened by this thought.

"Well, Richard, if you have made up your mind — but you know our wishes," said the old lord with a sigh. Little Val had been exercising his grandfather's temper by his excursions round the table a little while before. He had been obstinate and childishly disobedient till he was carried off by the ladies; and Lord Eskside, somewhat out of temper, as I have said, by reason of being depressed in spirits, had been ready to augur evil of the child's future career. But the contradiction of Val's father was more grave. When he resisted his parent's wishes it was of little use to be angry. The old lord sighed with a dreary sense that nothing was to be made by struggling. Of all hopeless endeavours that of attempting to make your child carry out the plans you have formed, is (he thought to himself) the most hopeless. Everything might favour the project which would make a man's friends happy, and satisfy all their aspirations for him; when, lo! a causeless caprice, a foolish dislike, would balk everything. It is true that he had for years resigned the hope of seeing Richard take his true place in the county, and show at once to the new men what the good old blood was worth, and to the old gentry that the Rosses were still their leaders, as they had been for generations; but this visit had brought a renewal of all the old visions. He had seen with a secret pride of which, even to his wife, he had not breathed a word, his son assume with ease a social position above his brightest hopes. The county had not only received him, but followed him, admired him, listened to his opinions as those of an oracle. To bring him in for the county after this, and to carry his election by acclamation, would be child's-play, his father thought. But Richard did not see it. He was, or assumed to be, indifferent to the applause of "the county." He cared nothing for his own country, or for that blessedness of dwelling among his own people which Scripture itself has celebrated.

No wonder that Lord Eskside should sigh. "I believe you think more of these fiddling play-acting foreigners," he said, after an interval of silence, during which his eyebrows and his under lip had been in full activity, "than for all our traditions, and all the duties of your condition in life."

"Every man has his taste, sir," Richard answered, with a shrug of his shoulders, which irritated his father still more deeply.

"Well, you are old enough to judge for yourself," he said, getting up abruptly from the table. A great many things to say to his son had been in the old lord's mind. He had meant to expound to him his own view of the politics of the day, at home, to which naturally Richard had not paid much attention. He had meant to impress upon him the line the Rosses had always taken in questions exclusively Scotch. But all this was cut short by Richard's refusal even to consider the question. Being sad beforehand by reason of his son's departure, I leave you to imagine how melancholy-cross and disappointed Lord Eskside was now.

"What! is that Imp still up?" he said, as going into the drawing-room he stumbled over his own best-beloved stick, upon which Val had been riding races round the room. "How dared you take my stick, sir? If you do that again you shall be whipped."

"You daren't whip me," cried saucy Valentine. "Grandma says I am never to be frightened no more—I ain't; and I'm to have what I want. Grandma! he is taking my stick away!"

"Your stick, ye little whipper-snapper! No; one generation succeeds another soon enough, but not so soon as that. Send the boy to his bed, my lady. He ought to have been there an hour ago."

"Just for this night," said Lady Eskside, as she caught the little rebel, and, holding him close in her arms, smoothed the ruffled curls on his forehead, and whispered in his ear that he was to be good, and not to make grandma angry. "Just for this night—as his father is going away."

"Oh, his father!" said her husband, with a slight snort of irritation which showed Lady Eskside that the last evening had been little more satisfactory to him than to herself. Her own voice had faltered a little as she spoke of Richard's departure, and she looked at him wistfully, with an incipient tear in the corner of

her eye, hoping (though she might have known better) for some response; but Richard, as bland and gentle as ever, had seated himself by Mary, to whom he was talking, and altogether ignored his mother's furtive appeal. Valentine gave her enough to do just at that moment to hold him, which, perhaps, was well for her; and Lord Eskside walked away to the other end of the room, pretending to look at the books which were scattered about the tables, and whistling softly under his breath, which was one of his ways of showing irritation. Even Mary was agitated, she scarcely knew why; not on Richard's account, she said to herself, but as feeling the suppressed excitement in the house, the secret sense of disappointment and deep heart-dissatisfaction which was in those two old people, who had but little time before them to be happy in, and so wanted the sunshine of life all the more. Richard's visit had been a success in one sense. It had answered to their highest hopes, and more than answered; but yet in more intimate concerns, in a still closer point of view, it had been a failure; and of this the father and mother were all the more tremulously sensible that he showed so little consciousness of it—nay, no consciousness at all. He sat for a long time by Mary, talking to her of the most ordinary subjects, while his mother sat silent in her chair, and Lord Eskside, at the other end of the room, made-believe to look for something in the drawers of one of the great cabinets, opening and shutting them impatiently. Richard sat and talked quite calmly during these demonstrations, unaffected by them. He kissed his child coolly on the forehead, and bid him good-bye, with something like a sentiment of internal gratitude to be rid of the little plague, who rather repelled than attracted him. Mary went to her room shortly after Valentine's removal, which was effected with some difficulty, pleading headache, and in reality unable to bear longer the painful atmosphere of family constraint—Lady Eskside's half-appealing, half-affronted looks, and anxious consciousness of every movement her son made, and the old lord's irritation, which was more demonstrative. Then the three who were left gathered together round the fire, and some commonplace conversation—conversation studiously kept on the level of commonplace—ensued. Richard was to start early next morning, and proposed to take leave of his mother that night—"not to disturb

her at such an unearthly hour," he said. "Did you ever leave the house at any hour when I did not make you your breakfast and see you away?" Lady Eskside asked, with a thrill of pain in her voice. And as she left the room, she grasped his hand, and looked wistfully in his face, while he stooped to kiss her. "Richard," she said in a half whisper, as the two faces approached close to each other, "for myself I do not ask anything—but, oh, mind, your father is an old man! Please him if you can."

Lord Eskside was leaning upon the mantelpiece, gazing into the fire. He continued the same commonplace strain of talk when his son came back to him. How badly the trains corresponded; how hard it would be, without waiting at cross stations and losing much time, to accomplish the journey. "And as you have to make so early a start you should go to your bed soon, my boy," he said, and held out his hand; then grasping his son's, as his wife had done, added hastily, his eyebrows working up and down—"What I have been saying to you, Richard, may look less important to you than it does to me; but if you would make an effort to please your mother! She's been a good mother to you; and neither I nor anything in the world can give her the pleasure that you could. Good night. I shall see you in the morning;" and Lord Eskside took up his candle and hurried away.

The effect of this double appeal, so pathetically repeated, was not, I fear, all that it should have been. When he reached his own room, Richard yawned, and stretching his arms above his head—"Thank heaven! I shall be out of this to-morrow," he said.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

I HAVE now to change the scene and bring before the notice of the reader another group, representing another side of the picture, with interests still more opposite to those of Lord Eskside and his heir-apparent than were, even, the interests of that heir-apparent's mother. But to exhibit this other side, I have fortunately no need to descend to the lower levels of society, to Jean Macfarlane's disreputable tavern, or any haunt of doubtful people. On the contrary, I know no region of more unblemished respectability or higher character than Moray Place in Edinburgh, which is the spot I wish to indicate. Strangers and tourists do not know much of Moray Place. To

them—and great is their good-fortune—Edinburgh means the noble crowned ridge of the Old Town, fading off misty and mysterious into the wooded valley beneath; the great crags of the castle rising into mid-sky, and the beautiful background of hills. Upon this they gaze from the plateau of Princes Street; and far might they wander without seeing anything half so fine as that storied height, lying grey in sunshine, or twinkling with multitudinous lights, as the blue poetic twilight steals over the Old Town. But on the other side of that middle ground of Princes Street lies a New Town, over which our grandfathers rejoiced greatly as men rejoice over the works of their own hands, despite the fullest acknowledgment of the work of their ancestors. There lie crescents, squares, and places, following the downward sweep of the hill, with, it is true, no despicable landscape to survey (chiefly from the back windows), yet shutting themselves out with surprising complacency from all that distinguishes Edinburgh amid the other cities of the world. Nobody can say that we of the Scots nation are not proud of our metropolis; but this is how our fathers and grandfathers—acute humorous souls as most of them were, with a large spice of romance in them, and of much more distinctly marked individual character than we possess in our day—asserted the fundamental indifference of human nature, in the long-run, to natural beauty. How comfortable, how commodious are those huge solid houses!—houses built for men to be warm in, to feast in, and gather their friends about them, but not with any æsthetical meaning. Of all these streets, and squares, and crescents, Moray Place perhaps is the most "palatial," or was, at least, at the period of which I speak. Personally, I confess that it makes a very peculiar impression on me. Years ago, so many that I dare not count them, there appeared in the pages of this Magazine a weird and terrible story called the "Iron Shroud," in which the feelings of an unhappy criminal shut up in an iron cell (I think, to make the horror greater, of his own invention) which by some infernal contrivance diminished every day, window after window disappearing before the wretch's eyes, until at last the horrible prison fell upon him and became at once his grave and his shroud—were depicted with vivid power. This thrilling tale always returns to my mind when I stand within



the grand and gloomy enclosure of Moray Place. It seems to me that the walls quiver and draw closer even while I look at them; and if the circle were gradually to lessen, one window disappearing after another, and the whole approaching slowly, fatally towards the centre, I should not be surprised. But in Edinburgh, Moray Place is, or was, considered a noble circus of houses, and nobody feels afraid to live in it. I suppose as it has now stood so long, it will never crash together, and descend on the head of some breathless wretch in the garden which forms its centre; but a superstitious dread of this catastrophe, I own, would haunt me if I were rich enough to be able to live in Moray Place.

Mr. Alexander Pringle, however, never once thought of this when he established his tabernacle there. This gentleman was an advocate, to use the Scotch term — the cosmopolitan and universal term, instead of the utterly conventional and unmeaning appellation of barrister common to the English alone — at the Scotch bar. His father before him had been a W. S., or Writer to the Signet — a title of which I confess myself unable to explain the exact formal meaning. How these comparatively unimportant people came to be the heirs-at-law, failing the Rosses, of the barony of Eskside, I need not tell. Pringle is a name which bears no distinction in its mere sound like Howard or Seymour; but notwithstanding, it is what is called in Scotland “a good name;” and this branch of the Pringles were direct descendants from one of the Eskside barons. When Dick Ross’s misfortunes happened, and his wife forsook him, Mr. Alexander Pringle, then himself recently married, producing heirs at a rate which would have frightened any political economist, and possessing a wife far too virtuous ever to think of running away from him, became all at once a person of consequence. He felt it himself more than any one, yet all society (in Moray Place) had felt it. By this time he had a very pretty little family, seven boys and one girl, all healthy, vigorous, and showing every appearance of long and prosperous life.

Fear not, dear reader! I do not mean to follow in this history the fortunes of Sandy, Willie, Jamie, Val, Bob, Tom, and Ben. They were excellent fellows, and eventually received an admirable education at the Edinburgh Academy; but I dare not enter upon the chronicle of such a race of giants. Val was born about the

time that Richard Ross’s children disappeared, and the Pringles christened the baby Valentine Ross, feeling that this might be a comfort to the old lord, whose “name-son” had thus mysteriously disappeared. Mr. Pringle spoke of this event as an “inscrutable dispensation,” and lamented his cousin’s strange misfortunes to everybody he encountered. But dreadful as the misfortune was, it made him several inches higher, and threw a wavering and uncertain glimmer of possible fortune to come over the unconscious heads of Sandy, Willie, Val, and the rest. They cared very little, but their father cared much, and was very wide awake, and constantly on the watch for every new event that might happen on Eskside. The seven years of quiet, during which nothing was heard of Richard’s children, ripened his hopes to such an extent that he almost felt himself the next in succession; for a mild *dilettante* like Dick Ross, who always lived abroad, did not seem an obstacle worth counting. Perhaps he was in consequence a little less careful of his practice at the bar; for this tantalizing shadow of a coronet had an effect upon his being which was scarcely justified by the circumstances: anyhow, though they managed to keep up their establishment in Moray Place, and to give the boys a good education, the Pringles did not advance in prosperity and comfort as they ought to have done, considering how well-connected they were, and the “good abilities” of the head of the house. Though he would sometimes foolishly show a disregard for the punctilios of the law in his own person, and was now and then outwitted in an argument, yet Mr. Pringle was understood to be an excellent lawyer; and he had a certain gift of lucidity in stating an argument which found him favour alike in the eyes of clients and of judges. Had he been a little more energetic, probably he would have already begun to run the course of legal preferment in Scotland. He was sheriff of the county in which his little property lay; and at one time no man had a better chance of rising to the rank of Solicitor-General or even Lord Advocate, and of finally settling as Lord Pringle or Lord Dalruluzian (the name of his property) upon the judicial bench. But his progress was arrested by this shadow of a possible promotion with which his profession would have nothing to do. Lord Dalruluzian might be a sufficiently great title if no more substantial dignity was to be had,



but Lord Eskside was higher; and the man's imagination went off wildly after the hereditary barony, leaving the reward of legal eminence far in the background. Gradually he had built himself up with the thought of this advancement; and though they were by no means rich enough to afford it, nothing but his wife's persistent holding back would have kept him from sending Sandy, his eldest boy, to Eton, by way of preparing him for his possible dignity. For the days when boys were sent from far and near to the High School of Edinburgh are over; and it is now the Scottish parent's pride to make English schoolboys of his sons, and to eliminate from the speech of his daughters all trace of their native accent. Mrs. Pringle, however, was prudent enough to withstand her husband's desire. "What would he do at Eton?" she said. "Learn English? If he's not content with the English you and I speak, it's a pity; and as for manners, he behaves himself very well in company as it is, and you'll never convince me that ill-mannered louts will be made into gentlemen by a year or two at a public school. You may send him if you like, Alexander—you're the master—but you will get no countenance from me." When a well-conditioned husband is told that he is the master, there is an end of him. Mr. Pringle was not made of hard enough material to resist so strong an opposition; and then it would have cost a great deal of money. "Well, my dear, we'll talk it over another time," he said, and put off the final decision indefinitely; which was a virtual giving in without the necessity of acknowledging defeat.

After all this gradually growing satisfaction and confidence in his own prospects, it is almost impossible to describe the tremendous effect which the news of Richard's return, and of the strange events which had taken place at Rosscraig, had upon the presumptive heir. He spoke not a word to any one for the first two days, but went about his business moodily, like a man under the shadow of some deadly cloud. The first shock was terrible, and scarcely less terrible was the excitement with which he listened to any rumour that reached him piecing the bits of news together. For a week he neglected his business; forsook, except when his attendance was compulsory, the Parliament House; and, if he could have had his will, would have done nothing all day but discuss the astounding tale, which at first he declared

to be entire fiction, a made-up story, and pretended to laugh at. He hung about his dressing-room door in the morning, while his wife finished her toilet, talking of it through the door-way; he hovered round the breakfast-table, after he had finished his meal, neglecting his "Scotsman;" he was continually appearing in the drawing-room when Mrs. Pringle did not want him, and "deaved her," as she said, with this eternal subject. To no one else could he speak with freedom; but this sweet privilege of wifehood, instead of being an unmingled good, often becomes, in the imperfection of all created things, a bore to the happy being who is thus elevated into the ideal position of her spouse's *alter ego*. Mrs. Pringle was not sentimental, and she soon got heartily sick of the subject. She would have cheerfully sold, at any time, for a new dinner dress—a thing she was pretty generally in want of—all her chances, which she had no faith in, of ever becoming Lady Eskside.

"Don't you think, Alexander," she said, having been driven beyond endurance by his rejection of a proposed match at golf on Musselburgh Links,—a thing which proved the profound gravity of the crisis,—“don't you think that the best thing you could do would be to take the coach and go out to Lasswade, and inquire for yourself? Take Violet with you—a little fresh air would do her good; and if you were to talk this over with somebody who knows about it, instead of with me, that knows nothing more than yourself —”

"Go—to Lasswade!" said Mr. Pringle—"that is a step that never occurred to me. No; I have not been invited to Rosscraig to meet Dick, and it would look very strange if I were to go where nobody is wanting me. If you think, indeed, that Vi would be better for a little change—But no; Lord Eskside would not like it—there would be an undignified look about it—an underhand look; still, if you think an expedition would be good for Vi —”

It was thus that under pressure of a personal anxiety a man maundered and hesitated who could give very sound advice to his clients, and could speak very much to the purpose before the Lords of Session. Mrs. Pringle knew all this, and did not despise her husband. She felt that she herself was wiser in their own practical concerns than he was, but gave him full credit for all his other advantages, and for that ability in his

profession which did not always make itself apparent at home. And she had a great many things to do on this particular afternoon, and was driven nearly out of her senses, she allowed afterwards, by this eternal discussion about Dick Ross's children and the succession to Eskside.

"Do you remember," she said, exercising her ingenuity, with as little waste of words as possible—for the mother of seven sons, not to speak of one little daughter besides, who is not rich enough to keep a great many servants, has not much time to waste in talk—"that little cottage at the Hewan, which I was always so fond of? The children are fond of it too. As you are off your match, and have the afternoon to spare, go away down and see if the Hewan is let, and whether we can have it for the summer."

"But, my dear, it is not half big enough for us," Mr. Pringle began.

His wife turned upon him a momentary look of impatience. "What does it matter whether it's big or little, when you want to see what is going on?" she said. "Take the child with you, and ask about it. It would be fine to have such a place, to send Vi when the heat gets too much for her." These last words were spoken in perfect good faith, for people in Edinburgh keep up a fiction of believing that the heat is too much for them—as if they were in London or Paris, or anywhere else, where people love a yearly change.

"So it would," said Mr. Pringle; "and you could go out yourself sometimes and spend a long day. It would do you good, my dear. I think I will go."

"Run and tell nurse to put on your best hat, Violet," said her mother; "and you may have your kid gloves, if you will be sure not to lose them. You are going out to the country with papa."

Little Violet rose from where she had been sitting, with a family of dolls round her, on the carpet. She had been giving her family their daily lessons, and felt it a very important duty. She was but six years old—one of those fair-haired little maidens who abound in Scotland, with hair of two shades of colour, much brighter in the half-curved locks which lay about her shoulders than on her head. With these light locks she had dark eyes, an unusual combination, and pretty infant features, scarcely formed yet into anything which gave promise of beauty. She was so light that Sandy, her big

brother, could hold her up in his hand, to the admiration of all beholders. One daughter in such a family holds an ideal position, such as few girls achieve otherwise at so early an age. Their little sister was the very princess of all these boys. The big ones petted and spoiled her, the little ones believed in and revered her. To the one she was something more dainty than any plaything—a living doll, the prettiest ornament in the house, and the only one which could be handled without breaking wantonly, on purpose to have them punished, in their hands; and to the others she was a small mother, quaintly unlike the big one, yet imposing upon them by her assumption of the maternal ways and authority. When she addressed the nursery audience with, "Now you 'little boys, mind what I say to you," the babies acknowledged the shadow of authority, and felt that Vi wielded a visionary sceptre. She was very serious in her views of life, and held what might appear to some people exaggerated ideas as to the guilt of spilling your tea upon your frock, or tearing your pinafore; and was apt to wonder where naughty little children who did such things expected to go to, with an unswerving and perfectly satisfied faith in everlasting retribution, such as would have edified the severest believer. Violet awarded these immense penalties to very trifling offences, not being as yet wise enough to discriminate or get her landscape into perspective. Her dolls were taught their duty in the most forcible way, and she herself carried out her tenets by punishing them severely when they displeased her. She got up from the midst of them now, and though she had been lecturing them solemnly a few minutes before, huddled them up, with legs and arms in every kind of contortion, into a corner which was appropriated to her. She walked up-stairs very gravely to be dressed, but made such a fuss about her kid gloves, that nurse, with two baby boys on her hands, was nearly driven to her wits' end. On ordinary occasions, Vi wore little cotton gloves, with the tops of the fingers sewed inside in a little lump, which made her small hands (as they used to make mine) extremely uncomfortable. When she was fully equipped, she was a very trim little woman—not fine, but as imposing and dignified in her appearance as a lady of six can manage to be; and when the anxious heir-at-law to the Eskside barony came down-stairs with her to start on this

mission of inquiry, she was very particular that he should have his umbrella nicely rolled, and that his hat should be brushed to perfection. She liked her papa to be neat, as she was, and took, in short, a general charge of him, as of all the house.

This, dear reader, is the villain of this history, who is bent on spoiling, if he can, the hero's prospects, and working confusion in all the arrangements of the Eskside family, for the advantage of himself and his Sandy, the next heir failing Richard Ross's problematical children. But on this particular day when he lifted his little girl into the coach, and made her comfortable and smiled at her as she chatted to him, notwithstanding all his preoccupations, he was not a very bad villain. He would have liked to turn out to the streets the little beggar's brat of whom he had heard such incredible stories, and who was supposed to be likely to supplant in his lawful inheritance himself and his handsome boys; but then he had never realized the individuality of this beggar's brat, while his heart was very much set upon his own children and their advantage—a state of mind not very uncommon. He was as good to little Violet as if he had been an example of all the virtues, and instead of feeling at all ashamed of so very small a companion, was as proud of her as if she had been a duchess. To see her brighten up as the coach rolled on through the green country roads distracted him for the first time from his all-absorbing anxiety; and as they came in sight of the village of Lasswade, and he pointed out the river and the woods and the village houses to little Vi, he almost forgot all about the barony of Eskside. You would say that evil intentions could scarcely take very deep root in a heart so occupied; but human nature is very subtle in its combinations, and it is curious how easily virtue can sometimes accommodate itself by the side of very ill neighbours. Mr. Pringle had no idea or intention of working mischief, though mischief might no doubt arise by chance in his path. All that he wanted was justice, and to make sure that there was no cuckoo's egg foisted into the nest at Eskside.

#### CHAPTER IX.

"OH, sir, no, sir," said the smiling landlord at the Black Bull, where Mr. Pringle went to have some luncheon and to order "a machine," to take Vi and himself to the Hewan—the little cottage,

which was the ostensible end of his mission—"there's different stories going about the country, but we must not believe all we hear. The real truth is, I'm assured by them that ought to know, that the little boy came over from foreign parts with his father, the Honourable Richard Ross, to be brought up as is befitting, in a decent-like house, and among folk that have some fear of God before their eyes,—which it's no easy to find, so far as I can hear, abroad."

"Came over with his father!" cried Mr. Pringle, through whose soul this information smote like a sword. If this was the case, farewell to the beggar's brat theory, and to all hope both for Sandy and himself.

"Well, that's the most reasonable story," said the landlord; "there's plenty of other nonsense flying about the country. What we a' heard at first was, that some gangrel body knockit loud and lang at the ha' door the night of that awfu' storm, and threw in a bundle, nigh knocking over auld Harding the butler; and when lights were got—for the lamp was blown out by the wind—it was found to be this boy. It's an awfu' age for sensation this, and that's the sensational story folk ca' it. But Mr. Richard, there can be nae doubt, has been home direct from Florence and Eitaly, and what so likely as that he should bring the bairn himself? So far as I can learn, a'budy that is anybody, so to speak, the gentry and them that ought to ken, believes he came with his father. The servants and folk about the town uphold the other story; but you ken, sir, the kind of story that pleases common folk best? Aye something wonderful; fancy afore reason."

"But surely it is very easy to get to the bottom of it," said Mr. Pringle, with a beating heart. "Was the child with Mr. Ross, for instance, when he arrived?"

"Na, I never heard that," said the landlord, swaying over to the other side. "The carriage passed by our windows. So far as I could see, there was but himself inside, and his man on the box. We maunna inquire too close into details, sir—especially you that are a relation of the family."

"That is exactly why it is so important I should know."

"Well-a-well, sir! they do say, I allow," said the man, sinking his voice, "that the little laddie was here before his father; that's rather my own opinion—no that I ever saw him. They sent

down here to inquire about a woman and a wean; nae woman or wean had been here. There was one, I heard, at Jean Macfarlane's on the other side of the bridge, which is a place no decent person can be expected to ken about."

"And who was the woman?" said Mr. Pringle, with breathless interest.

"Na, that's mair than I can tell. Some say a randy wife that's been seen of late about the country-side; some says one thing and some another. Auld Simon the postman and Merran Miller were twa I'm told that saw her; but this is a' hearsay—a' hearsay; I ken nae-thing of my own knowledge. I must say, however," added the landlord, seriously, "that I blame themselves up at the big house for most of the stir. They sent down inquiring and inquiring, putting things into folk's heads about this woman and the wean. My lord had a' them that saw her up to the house, and put them through an examination. It was not a prudent thing to do—it was that, more than anything else, that made folk begin to talk."

"And was that before Richard Ross came home?"

"Oh ay, sir—oh ay; a good week before."

"At the time, in short, that the child came?" said Mr. Pringle, with legal clearness.

"Well, Mr. Pringle—about the time the bairn was said to have come, I'll no deny; but a'boddy that's best able to judge has waned me no to build my faith on a coincidence like that. Maist likely it was nothing more than a co-innecidence. They're queer things, as you that are a lawyer must know."

"Yes, they are queer things," said Mr. Pringle, with a flicker of hope; and then he changed the conversation, and began to inquire about the Hewan, and whether it was let for the season, or if any one had been in treaty for it. "My wife has a fancy for the place. She was there when she was young," he said, half apologetically.

"But it's a wee bit box of a place—no fit for your fine family. It would bring the roses, though, into little Miss's cheeks, for the air's grand up on that braehead."

"It is just for her we want it," Mr. Pringle said, with an unusual openness of confidence. "She is rather pale. Come, Vi, there is the gig at the door."

Vi walked down-stairs very demurely and got into the gig, trying to look as if

she mounted with some dignified difficulty, and not to clamber up with the speed and sureness which her breeding among so many boys had taught her. She had been listening, though she took no part in the talk. "Who is the little boy, papa?" she said, curiously, as they drove briskly along through the keen but sunshiny air.

"A little boy at Rossraig up yonder among the trees. Do you see the turrets, Vi?"

"Yes, I see them: are they made of gold? and is he a bad little boy, papa?"

"No, Vi; I don't suppose he means it, and you don't understand, my pet; but it would be very bad for Sandy and the rest if he were to stay there."

"Then, papa, if it will be bad for Sandy, and the little boy is naughty, why not drive up the avenue and take him and carry him somewhere where he can do no harm?"

This was Violet's incisive way of dealing with difficulties. She had all the instincts of a grand inquisitor: and would have acted with the same benevolent absorption in the grand object of doing good to her patient whether he liked it or no. The pair drove at a spanking pace up the pretty road among the budding trees, through which at intervals there were glimpses of Esk brawling over his boulders, his brown impetuous stream all flecked with foam, like a horse in full career. A sensation of positive happiness was in Mr. Pringle's mind as he drove along the familiar road through the country which he hoped might yet acknowledge his influence and authority. He could not have kidnapped the little offender as Violet suggested; but he was glad to think that there was every chance he was an impostor, and the field clear for himself and his heir. A lawsuit rose up before him in fullest dramatic detail, a kind of thing very attractive to his professional imagination. He saw how much more difficult it would be on the other side to prove the right of this supposititious heir, than it would be on his to throw doubt upon him. I do not think the thought ever crossed his mind that the child might not be supposititious at all, but the real grandson of Lord Esk-side. It is so much easier when you are deeply interested in a subject to see your own side of the question, and to believe that yours is the side of right. In his sense of the possibilities of the case his spirits rose, and he enjoyed his drive to the Hewan with his innocent little girl



beside him. Up they went, mounting the long slope, now letting the horse walk at the steep parts, now urging him to a momentary spurt, now rolling rapidly along on a shady level, with the branches almost meeting overhead. The day was warm for April, yet the wind was fresh and chilly, and blew in their faces with a keen and sweet freshness which brought the colour to little Violet's cheek. "Little Vi would change into little Rose up here on Eskside," said Violet's father—he had not felt so light of heart for many a day.

The Hewan is the tiniest of little cottages, perched high up on a bank of the Esk, and surveying for a mile or two the course of the picturesque little stream between its high wooded banks, with here and there a pretty house shining far off among the trees, on some little plateau of greensward, and the sound of the river filling the air with a soft rustling and tinkling. Alas! there are paper-mills now along the course of that romantic stream. I was but six years old, like Violet, when I first saw that wild little place, and ever since (how long a time!) it has remained in my mind, charming me with vague longings. Vi trotted to the grassy ridge and gazed down the course of the stream and said nothing; for what can a child say, who has no phrases about the beautiful at her tongue's end, and can only stare and wonder, and recollect, all her life after, that brawling, surging river, those high trees, inclining from either bank towards each other, and that ineffable roof of sky? The old woman who kept the cottage consented that it was still unlet, and threw no difficulties in the way; and Mr. Pringle secured it there and then for the summer. "I should like to buy it," he said to himself, "if it were not —" The idea of the great possibilities before him suddenly surged upwards, flooding his soul; and then a hunger seized him for the river, and the woods, and the fair country which they threaded through. He wanted to have them, to possess them—not the rent of them, or the wealth of them, but themselves—a passion of acquisition which is something like love, swelling suddenly in his heart. He forgot himself gazing at them, till Vi roused him, plucking at his coat, "Papa, it is bonnie; but why do you look and look, with your eyes so big and strange, like the wolf that ate little Red Riding Hood?"

"Am I like a wolf?" he said, half laughing, yet tremulous in his momentary

passion, seizing the child in his arms, and lifting her up to share his view. "Look, Vi! perhaps some day all that may be yours and mine."

Violet looked gravely as a duty; but there was something in his strenuous grasp that frightened her, and she struggled to be put down. "I do not think," she said, with precocious philosophy, "that it would be any bonnier if it was yours, papa—or even mine."

Mr. Pringle was tremulous after this burst of unusual emotion, for what has a respectable middle-aged lawyer to do with passion either of one kind or another? The fit went off, and he felt slightly ashamed of himself; but the thrill and flutter of feeling did not go off for some time. He sent the gig and horse to meet him at the Eskside gates, and taking Vi's hand in his, went down by a pathway through the woods to a side entrance. "Perhaps we shall see this little boy we were talking of," he said; but he was far from having made up his mind to confront the two old people, my lord and my lady, who would see through his pretences, as people are clever to see through the guiles of their heirs. He was reluctant to face them boldly; but yet he was—how curious!—eager to look the present crisis in the race, and see for himself what he had to fear. After they had gone a little way along the woodland path, which was still high above the course of the stream, though accompanied all the way by the sound of its waters as by a song, Violet escaped from her father's hand, and ran on in advance, making excursions of her own, hither and thither, darting about in her brown coat and scarlet ribbons like a robin-red-breast under the budding branches. Mr. Pringle, lost in his own thoughts, let her stray before him, expecting no encounter. Presently, however, there came from Vi a little cry of surprise and excitement, which quickened his step. He hurried on after her, and came to an opening in the trees where the path widened out. It was a small circular platform open to the slope of the river-bank, and with a rustic seat placed in an excavation on the higher side of the way. Into this open space another little figure had rushed from the other side, panting and flushed, grasping a tall stick, and stood, suddenly arrested, in front of Violet, facing her, with an answering cry, with big blue eyes expanded to twice their natural size, and a face suddenly filled with curiosity and wonder. Mr. Pringle it may be supposed



was *blat* in the matter of boys, and I do not think that the affectionate father of an honest plain family is ever a great amateur of childish beauty. This little figure, however, in his fantastic velvet dress, with his hat perched on the back of his head, and all his dark curls ruffled back from his bold brown forehead, struck him with a certain keen perception of beauty which was almost pain. Ah! and with a perception of something else which was still sharper pain. He fell back a step to recollect himself, staggered by the sudden impression. What made the child so like Richard Ross? What malignant freak of fortune had so amalgamated with the dark complexion and look which was not Richard's those family features? Mr. Pringle stood as if spell-bound, contemplating the child about whom he had been so curious, about whom his curiosity was so fatally satisfied now.

"You are the boy that lives at Ross-craig," said Violet, feeling the responsibility of a first address to lie with her, but somewhat frightened, with tremblings in her voice.

"Yes; and who are you?" cried the little fellow. Mr. Pringle behind noticed with a pang that he spoke with an "English accent," that advantage which the ambitious Scotch parent so highly estimates. This gave him a still deeper pang than the resemblance, for it seemed to give the final blow to the beggar's brat theory. Beggars' brats in Mr. Pringle's experience spoke Scotch.

"Who are you?" said Val. "I never saw you before. Will you come and play? It's dull here, with no one to play with. Do you hear any one coming? I've run away from grandpapa."

"But you oughtn't to run away from your grandpapa," said Violet. "It is very naughty to run away, especially when the other people can't run so fast as you."

"That's the fun," cried the other, with a laugh. "If you'll come and play, I'll show you squirrels and heaps of things. But help me first to hide this big stick. I think I hear him coming—quick, quick!"

"Would he beat you with it?" said Vi, growing pale with terror.

"Quick, quick!" cried the boy, seizing her by the wrist; but just then there was a rush of steps in the sloping path which wound down the brae to this centre, and Lord Eskside himself appeared, half angry, half laughing, pulling

aside the branches to look through. "Give me back my stick, you rogue!" he cried, then paused, arrested, as Mr. Pringle had been, by that pretty woodland picture. It was something between a Watteau group, and the ruder common rendering of the "Babes in the Wood:" the girl in her scarlet ribbons, with liquid dark eyes uplifted, her face somewhat pale with mingled terror and self-control; the boy all flushed and beautiful in his cavalier dress, grasping her by the wrist; with the faintly green branches meeting over their heads, and the brown harmonious woods, all musical with evening notes of birds and echoes of the running water, for a background. The men on either side were so impressed by the picture that they paused mutually, in involuntary admiration. But they had both perceived each other, and though their sentiments were not very friendly, politeness commanded that they should speak.

"I hope you are well, Lord Eskside," said Mr. Pringle, stepping with an effort into the charmed circle. "I had just brought my little girl through the woods to see how beautiful they are. This is my Violet; and this fine little fellow is—a visitor, I suppose?"

"Is it you, Alexander Pringle?" said Lord Eskside. "I could not believe my eyes. It is a sight for sore een to see you here."

"Indeed it is chance,—mere chance," said Pringle, with a fulness of apology which he was himself uneasily conscious was quite uncalled for. "I have been up at the Hewan, which I have taken for the summer."

"The Hewan for the summer! why, man, it's a mere cottage; and what has become of your own place?"

"Oh, I retain my old place; but it is a long way off, and best for the autumn, when we can flit altogether. My wife is fond of the Hewan, though it is so small, and we thought it would be handy to run out for a day now and then. In short, it suits us. Does this little fellow, Lord Eskside, belong to the place? or is he a visitor? He seems to have struck up a sudden friendship with my girl."

"A visitor!" said Lord Eskside. "Do you mean to say you have not heard—do you see no likeness in him? This is my grandson, Pringle—my successor one day, I hope—Richard's eldest son."

"Richard's son!—you are joking," said Mr. Pringle, growing pale, but with a smile that hurt him,— "you are joking,

Lord Eskside; a child of that complexion Richard's son!"

Lord Eskside felt that his adversary had hit the blot—and, to tell the truth, he himself had never perceived Val's resemblance to Richard. "Colouring is not everything," he said; "I suppose he has his complexion from his mother:" then with a return blow, "but I can't expect you to be very much delighted with the sight of him, Pringle; he takes the wind out of your sails—yours and your boys'."

"I hope my boys will be able to manage for themselves," said Pringle, with a forced laugh. "If I say that I don't see the resemblance, it is for no such reason. I have never hungered for other folk's rights: but that is one thing and justice is another. Vi, my dear, we must go."

"What! won't you come and see my lady? She will be affronted if you pass so near without calling; and you see," said the old lord, with an effort at cordiality, "the children have made friends already. Come and have some dinner, man, before you go home. You know me of old. My bark is waur than my bite—I meant no harm."

"Oh, there is no offence," said the heir-at-law; "but it's getting late for a delicate child, and our gig is waiting at the wood-gate. Violet, you must bid the little man good-bye."

"He is not a naughty boy, papa, as you said—he is a nice boy," said Vi, looking up with an appeal in her eyes; "please, I should like to stay."

"And what made you think he was naughty, my bonnie girl?" said Lord Eskside, in insinuating tones.

"Come, come, Violet, you must be obedient," said her father, hastily, shaking hands with his kinsman, whose old face, half grim, half humorous, was lighted up with sudden and keen enjoyment of the situation. Mr. Pringle hurried his daughter on almost hastily in the confusion of his feelings. He had never been harsh to her before; and Violet, in her disappointment, took to crying quietly under her breath. "I should like to stay—I should like to stay," she murmured, till out of pure exasperation the kindest of fathers could have whipped her, and thought of that operation as an actual relief to his feelings. Lord Eskside, on his part, stood still in the clearing, holding back Val, who was more vehement. "I want her to play with me, and you said I was to have whatever I wanted," the boy

cried, struggling with all his might to break away.

"You must know, my man, that there are many things which we all want and cannot get," cried the old lord, holding him fast; and then he burst into a low laugh. "Here's a bonnie state of affairs already," he said to himself: "Richard's son breaking bounds to be after Sandy Pringle's daughter! It's the best joke I've heard for many a day. Come, Val, come, like a good boy. We'll go and tell grandma. She may have a little girl in her pocket for anything you and I know."

"But I don't want any little girl; I want *that* little girl," cried Val, with precocious discrimination. The old lord chuckled more and more as he half led, half dragged him up the steep path towards the house.

"Why, man, if you're after them like this already, we'll have our hands full by the time you're of age." But when he had said this, Lord Eskside paused and contemplated his grandson, and shook his head. "Can he be Richard's son after all?" the old man asked himself.

Lord Eskside, however, looked grim enough before he went into the house, where he betook himself at once to the drawing-room, in which his wife sat alone, at a window overlooking the river. He went in to her moody, with the air of a man who has something to say.

"What is the matter?" said Lady Eskside.

"Oh, nothing's the matter. We're entering into the botherations I foresaw, that's all that's the matter. Who do you think I met in the woods but that lawyer-rascal Sandy Pringle, come to spy out the nakedness of the land!"

"And what nakedness is there to spy into? and what can Sandy Pringle do to you or me?" said the old lady, with a slight elevation of her head.

"Not much, perhaps, to you or me. He's taken the Hewan, Catherine, where he can lie in wait like an auld spider till he gets us into his net."

"I don't understand you," said the old lady, with the light of battle waking in her eyes. "What does it matter to us where Sandy Pringle lives? He has been out of the question, poor man, as everybody knows, since Providence sent to my son Richard his two bonnie boys."

"It's fine romancing," said Lord Eskside. "Where's the t'other of your bonnie boys, my lady? And where is your proof of this one that will satisfy a court

of law? Likeness is all very well, and natural instinct's all very well, but they make little impression on the Court of Session. And though he's a haverel in private life, Sandy Pringle was always a clever lawyer. If you do not find the woman there will be a lawsuit, that will leave Eskside but an empty title, and melt all the lands away."

"We'll find the woman," said the old lady, clasping her fine nervous hands. "I'll move earth and heaven before I'll let anything come in my boy's way."

At this moment Val burst in, rosy and excited, with his grandfather's stick, which in the vehemence of their new ideas both the child and the old man had forgotten. "Grandma, I want that little girl to play with. Send over directly," cried Val, in hot impatience, "to get me the little girl!"

"You have enough on your hands, my lady," said Lord Eskside.

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From The Cornhill Magazine.

#### DR. JOHNSON'S WRITINGS.

A BOOK has recently appeared of which it is the professed object to give to the modern generation of lazy readers the pith of Boswell's immortal biography. I shall, for sufficient reasons, refrain from discussing the merits of the performance. One remark, indeed, may be made in passing. The circle of readers to whom such a book is welcome must, of necessity, be limited. To the true lovers of Boswell it is, to say the least, superfluous; the gentlest omissions will always mangle some people's favourite passages, and additions, whatever skill they may display, necessarily injure that dramatic vivacity which is one of the great charms of the original. The most discreet of cicerones is an intruder when we open our old favourite and, without further magic, retire into that delicious nook of eighteenth century society. Upon those, again, who cannot appreciate the infinite humour of the original, the mere excision of the less lively pages will be thrown away. There remains only that narrow margin of readers whose appetites, languid but not extinct, can be titillated by the promise that they shall not have the trouble of making their own selection. Let us wish them good digestions, and, in spite of modern changes of fashion, more robust taste for the future. I would still hope that to many readers Boswell has been

what he has certainly been to some, the first writer who gave them a love of English literature, and the most charming of all companions long after the bloom of novelty has departed. I subscribe most cheerfully to Mr. Lewes's statement that he estimates his acquaintances according to their estimate of Boswell. A man, indeed, may be a good Christian, and an excellent father of a family, without loving Johnson or Boswell, for a sense of humour is not one of the primary virtues. But Boswell's is one of the very few books which, after many years of familiarity, will still provoke a hearty laugh even in the solitude of a study; and the laughter is of that kind which does one good.

I do not wish, however, to pronounce one more eulogy upon an old friend, but to say a few words on a question which he sometimes suggests. Macaulay's well-known but provoking essay is more than usually lavish in overstrained paradoxes. He has explicitly declared that Boswell wrote one of the most charming of books because he was one of the greatest of fools. And his remarks suggest, if they do not implicitly assert, that Johnson wrote some of the most unreadable of books, although, if not because, he possessed one of the most vigorous intellects of the time. Mr. Carlyle has given a sufficient explanation of the first paradox; but the second may justify a little further inquiry. As a general rule, the talk of a great man is the reflection of his books. Nothing is so false as the common saying that the presence of a distinguished writer is generally disappointing. It exemplifies a very common delusion. People are so impressed by the disparity which sometimes occurs, that they take the exception for the rule. It is, of course, true that a man's verbal utterances may differ materially from his written utterances. He may, like Addison, be shy in company; he may, like many retired students, be slow in collecting his thoughts; or he may, like Goldsmith, be over anxious to shine at all hazards. But a patient observer will even then detect the essential identity under superficial differences; and in the majority of cases, as in that of Macaulay himself, the talking and the writing are palpably and almost absurdly similar. The whole art of criticism consists in learning to know the human being who is partially revealed to us in his spoken or his written words. Whatever the means of communication, the problem is the same.

The two methods of inquiry may supplement each other; but their substantial agreement is the test of their accuracy. If Johnson, as a writer, appears to us to be a mere windbag and manufacturer of sesquipedalian verbiage, whilst, as a talker, he appears to be one of the most genuine and deeply feeling of men, we may be sure that our analysis has been somewhere defective. The discrepancy is, of course, partly explained by the faults of Johnson's style; but the explanation only removes the difficulty a degree further. "The style is the man" is a very excellent aphorism, though some eminent writers have lately pointed out that Buffon's original remark was *le style c'est de l'homme*. That only proves that, like many other good sayings, it has been polished and brought to perfection by the process of attrition in numerous minds, instead of being struck out at a blow by a solitary thinker. From a purely logical point of view, Buffon may be correct; but the very essence of an aphorism is that slight exaggeration which makes it more biting whilst less rigidly accurate. According to Buffon, the style might belong to a man as his coat or his hat belongs to him. There are parasitical writers who, in the old phrase, have "formed their style," by the imitation of accepted models, and who have, therefore, possessed it only by right of appropriation. Boswell has a discussion as to the writers who may have served Johnson in this capacity. But, in fact, Johnson, like all other men of strong idiosyncrasy, formed his style as he formed his legs. The peculiarities of his limbs were in some degree the result of conscious efforts in walking, swimming, and "buffeting with his books." This development was doubtless more determined by the constitution which he brought into the world, and the circumstances under which he was brought up. And even that queer Johnsonese, which Macaulay supposes him to have adopted in accordance with a more definite literary theory, will probably appear to be the natural expression of certain innate tendencies, and of the mental atmosphere which he breathed from youth. To appreciate fairly the strangely cumbersome form of his written speech, we must penetrate more deeply than may at first sight seem necessary beneath the outer rind of this literary Behemoth. The difficulty of such spiritual dissection is, indeed, very great; but some little light may be thrown upon the subject by fol-

lowing out such indications as we possess.

The talking Johnson is sufficiently familiar to us. So far as Boswell needs an interpreter, Mr. Carlyle has done all that can be done. He has concentrated and explained what is diffused, and often unconsciously indicated, in Boswell's pages. When reading Boswell, we are half ashamed of his power over our sympathies. It is like turning over a portfolio of sketches, caricatured, inadequate, and each giving only some imperfect aspect of the original. Macaulay's smart paradoxes only increase our perplexity by throwing the superficial contrasts into stronger relief. Mr. Carlyle, with true imaginative insight, gives us at once the essence of Johnson; he brings before our eyes the luminous body of which we had previously been conscious only by a series of imperfect images refracted through a number of distorted media. To render such a service effectually is the highest triumph of criticism; and it would be impertinent to say again in feeble language what Mr. Carlyle has expressed so forcibly. We may, however, recall certain general conclusions by way of preface to the problem which he has not expressly considered, how far Johnson succeeded in expressing himself through his writing.

The world, as Mr. Carlyle sees it, is composed, we all know, of two classes: there are "the dull millions, who, as a dull flock, roll hither and thither, whithersoever they are led," and there are a few superior natures who can see and can will. There are, in other words, the heroes, and those whose highest wisdom is to be hero-worshippers. Johnson's glory is that he belonged to the sacred band, though he could not claim within it the highest, or even a high, rank. In the current dialect, therefore, he was "nowise a clothes-horse or patent digester, but a genuine man." Whatever the accuracy of the general conception, or of certain corollaries which are drawn from it, the application to Johnson explains one main condition of his power. Persons of colourless imagination may hold—nor will we dispute their verdict—that Mr. Carlyle overcharges his lights and shades, and brings his heroes into too startling a contrast with the vulgar herd. Yet it is undeniable that the great bulk of mankind are transmitters rather than originators of spiritual force. Most of us are necessarily condemned to express our thoughts in formulas which we have



learnt from others and can but slightly tinge with our feeble personality. Nor, as a rule, are we even consistent disciples of any one school of thought. What we call our opinions are mere bundles of incoherent formulæ, arbitrarily stitched together because our reasoning faculties are too dull to make inconsistency painful. Of the vast piles of books which load our libraries, ninety-nine hundredths and more are but printed echoes: and it is the rarest of pleasures to say, here is a distinct record of impressions at first hand. We commonplace beings are hurried along in the crowd, living from hand to mouth on such slices of material and spiritual food as happen to drift in our direction, with little more power of taking an independent course, or of forming any general theory, than the polyps which are carried along by an oceanic current. Ask any man what he thinks of the world in which he is placed: whether, for example, it is on the whole a scene of happiness or misery, and he will either answer by some cut-and-dried fragments of what was once wisdom, or he will confine himself to a few incoherent details. He had a good dinner to-day and a bad toothache yesterday, and a family affliction or blessing the day before. But he is as incapable of summing up his impressions as an infant of performing an operation in the differential calculus. It is as rare as it is refreshing to find a man who can stand on his own legs and be conscious of his own feelings, who is sturdy enough to react as well as to transmit action, and lofty enough to raise himself above the hurrying crowd and have some distinct belief as to whence it is coming and whither it is going. Now Johnson, as one of the sturdiest of mankind, had the power due to a very distinct sentiment, if not to a very clear theory, about the world in which he lived. It had buffeted him severely enough, and he had formed a decisive estimate of its value. He was no man to be put off with mere phrases in place of opinions, or to accept doctrines which were not capable of expressing genuine emotion. To this it must be added, that his emotions were as deep and tender as they were genuine. How sacred was his love for his old and ugly wife; how warm his sympathy wherever it could be effective; how manly the self-respect with which he guarded his dignity through all the temptations of Grub Street, need not be once more pointed out. Perhaps, however, it is worth while to notice the extreme

rarity of such qualities. Many people, we think, love their fathers. Fortunately, that is true; but in how many people is filial affection strong enough to overpower the dread of eccentricity? How many men would have been capable of doing penance in Uttoxeter market years after their father's death for a long-passed act of disobedience? Most of us, again, would have a temporary emotion of pity for an outcast lying helplessly in the street. We should call the police, or send her in a cab to the workhouse, or, at least, write to *The Times* to denounce the defective arrangements of public charity. But it is perhaps better not to ask how many good Samaritans would take her on their shoulders to their own homes, care for her wants, and put her into a better way of life.

In the lives of most eminent men we find much good feeling and honourable conduct; but it is an exception, even in the case of good men, when we find that a life has been shaped by other than the ordinary conventions, or that emotions have dared to overflow the well-worn channels of respectability. The love which we feel for Johnson is due to the fact that the pivots upon which his life turned are invariably noble motives, and not mere obedience to custom. More than one modern writer has expressed a fraternal affection for Addison, and it is justified by the kindly humour which breathes through his *Essays*. But what anecdote of that most decorous and successful person touches our hearts or has the heroic ring of Johnson's wrestlings with adverse fortune? Addison showed how a Christian could die—when his life has run smoothly through pleasant places, secretaryships of state, and marriages with countesses, and when nothing—except a few overdoses of port wine—has shaken his nerves or ruffled his temper. A far deeper emotion rises at the deathbed of the rugged old pilgrim, who has fought his way to peace in spite of troubles within and without, who has been jeered in Vanity Fair and descended into the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and escaped with pain and difficulty from the clutches of Giant Despair. When the last feelings of such a man are tender, solemn, and simple, we feel ourselves in a higher presence than that of an amiable gentleman who simply died, as he lived, with consummate decorum.

On turning, however, from Johnson's life to his writings, from Boswell to the *Rambler*, it must be admitted that the



shock is trying to our nerves. The *Rambler* has, indeed, high merits. The impression which it made upon his own generation proves the fact; for the reputation, however temporary, was not won by a concession to the fashions of the day, but to the influence of a strong judgment uttering itself through uncouth forms. The melancholy which colours its pages is the melancholy of a noble nature. The tone of thought reminds us of Bishop Butler, whose writings, defaced by a style even more tiresome, though less pompous than Johnson's, have owed their enduring reputation to a philosophical acuteness in which Johnson was certainly very deficient. Both of these great men, however, impress us by their deep sense of the evils under which humanity suffers, and their rejection of the superficial optimism of the day. Butler's sadness, undoubtedly, is that of a recluse, and Johnson's that of a man of the world; but the sentiment is fundamentally the same. It may be added, too, that here, as elsewhere, Johnson speaks with the sincerity of a man drawing upon his own experience. He announces himself as a scholar thrust out upon the world rather by necessity than by choice; and a large proportion of the papers dwell upon the various sufferings of the literary class. Nobody could speak more feelingly of those sufferings, as no one had a closer personal acquaintance with them. But allowing to Johnson whatever credit is due to the man who performs one more variation on the old theme, *Vanitas vanitatum*, we must in candour admit that the *Rambler* has the one unpardonable fault: it is unreadable.

What an amazing turn he has for commonplace! That life is short, that marriages from mercenary motives produce unhappiness, that different men are virtuous in different degrees, that advice is generally ineffectual, that adversity has its uses, that fame is liable to suffer from detraction;—these and a host of other such maxims are of the kind upon which no genius and no depth of feeling can confer a momentary interest. Here and there indeed the pompous utterance invests them with an unlucky air of absurdity. "Let no man from this time," is the comment in one of his stories, "suffer his felicity to depend on the death of his aunt." Every actor, of course, uses the same dialect. A gay young gentleman tells us that he used to amuse his companions by giving them notice of his

friends' oddities. "Every man," he says, "has some habitual contortion of body, or established mode of expression, which never fails to excite mirth if it be pointed out to notice. By premonition of these particularities, I secured our pleasantries." The feminine characters, Flirtillas, and Cleoras, and Euphelias, and Penthesileas, are, if possible, still more grotesque. Macaulay remarks that he wears the petticoat with as ill a grace as Falstaff himself. The reader, he thinks, will cry out with Sir Hugh, "I like not when a 'oman has a great peard! I spy a great peard under her muffler." Oddly enough Johnson gives the very same quotation; and goes on to warn his supposed correspondents that Phyllis must send no more letters from the Horse Guards; and that Belinda must "resign her pretensions to female elegance till she has lived three weeks without hearing the politics of Button's Coffee House." The Doctor was probably sensible enough of his own defects. And yet there is still a more wearisome set of articles. In accordance with the precedent set by Addison, Johnson indulges in the dreariest of allegories. Criticism, we are told, was the eldest daughter of Labour and Truth, but at last resigned in favour of Time, and left Prejudice and False Taste to reign in company with Fraud and Mischief. Then we have the genealogy of Wit and Learning, and of Satire, the son of Wit and Malice, and an account of their various quarrels, and the decision of Jupiter. Neither are the histories of such semi-allegorical personages as Almamoulin, the son of Nouradin, or of Anningait and Ayut, the Greenland lovers, much more refreshing to modern readers. That Johnson possessed humour of no mean order, we know from Boswell; but no critic could have divined his power from the clumsy gambols in which he occasionally recreates himself. Perhaps his happiest effort is a dissertation upon the advantage of living in garrets; but the humour struggles and gasps dreadfully under the weight of words. There are, he says, "some who would continue blockheads, even on the summit of the Andes or the Peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was found to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Antæus was rational in no other place but his own shop."

How could a man of real power write such unendurable stuff? Or how, indeed,

could any man come to embody his thoughts in the style of which one other sentence will be a sufficient example? As it is afterwards nearly repeated, it may be supposed to have struck his fancy. The remarks of the philosophers who denounce temerity are, he says, "too just to be disputed and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed and the mind congested in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigoric wisdom." Is there not some danger, we ask, that the mind will be benumbed into perpetual torpidity by the influence of this soporific sapience? It is still true, however, that this Johnsonese, so often burlesqued and ridiculed, was, as far as we can judge, a genuine product. Macaulay says that it is more offensive than the mannerism of Milton or Burke, because it is a mannerism adopted on principle and sustained by constant effort. Facts do not confirm the theory. Milton's prose style seems to be the result of a conscious effort to run English into classical moulds. Burke's mannerism does not appear in his early writings, and we can trace its development from the imitation of Bolingbroke to the last declamation against the Revolution. But Johnson seems to have written Johnsonese from his cradle. In his first original composition, the preface to Father Lobo's *Abyssinia*, the style is as distinctive as in the *Rambler*. The Parliamentary reports in the *Gentleman's Magazine* make Pitt and Fox express sentiments which are probably their own in language which is as unmistakably Johnson's. It is clear that his style, good or bad, was the same from his earliest efforts. It is only in his last book, the *Lives of the Poets*, that the mannerism, though equally marked, is so far subdued as to be tolerable. What he himself called his habit of using "too big words and too many of them" was no affectation, but as much the result of his special idiosyncrasy as his queer gruntings and twitchings. Sir Joshua Reynolds indeed maintained, and we may believe so attentive an observer, that his strange physical contortions were the result of bad habit, not of actual disease. Johnson, he said, could sit as still as other people when his attention was called to it. And possibly, if he had tried, he

might have avoided the fault of making "little fishes talk like whales." But how did the bad habits arise? According to Boswell, Johnson professed to have "formed his style" partly upon Sir W. Temple and on "Chambers's Proposal for his Dictionary." The statement was obviously misinterpreted: but there is a glimmering of truth in the theory that the "style was formed"—so far as those words have any meaning—on the "giants of the seventeenth century," and especially upon Sir Thomas Browne. Johnson's taste, in fact, had led him to the study of writers in many ways congenial to him. His favourite book, as we know, was Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. The pedantry did not repel him; the weighty thought rightly attracted him; and the more complex structure of sentence was perhaps a pleasant contrast to an ear saturated with the Gallicized neatness of Addison and Pope. Unluckily, the secret of the old majestic cadence was hopelessly lost. Johnson, though spiritually akin to the giants, was the firmest ally and subject of the diver-fish dynasty which supplanted them. The very faculty of hearing seems to change in obedience to some mysterious law at different stages of intellectual development; and that which to one generation is delicious music is to another a mere droning of bagpipes or the grinding of monotonous barrel-organs.

Assuming that a man can find perfect satisfaction in the versification of the *Essay on Man*, we can understand his saying of Lycidas, that "the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain, and the numbers displeasing." In one of the *Ramblers* we are informed that the accent in blank verse ought properly to rest upon every second syllable throughout the whole line. A little variety must, he admits, be allowed to avoid satiety; but all lines which do not go in the steady jogtrot of alternate beats, as regularly as the piston of a steam-engine, are more or less defective. This simple-minded system naturally makes wild work with the poetry of the "mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies." Milton's harsh cadences are indeed excused on the odd ground, that he who was "vindicating the ways of God to man" might have been condemned for "lavishing much of his attention upon syllables and sounds." Moreover, the poor man did his best by introducing sounding proper names, even when they "added little music to his poem." An example

\* See, for example, the great debate on February 13th, 1741.

of this feeble, though well-meant expedient, being the passage about the moon, which —

the Tuscan artist views,  
At evening, from the top of Fiesole  
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, &c.

This profanity passed at the time for orthodoxy. But the misfortune was, that Johnson, unhesitatingly subscribing to the rules of Queen Anne's critics, is always instinctively feeling after the grander effects of the old school. Nature prompts him to the stateliness of Milton, whilst Art orders him to deal out long and short syllables alternately, and to make them up in parcels of ten, and then tie these parcels together in pairs by the help of a rhyme. The natural utterance of a man of strong perceptions, but of unwieldy intellect, of a melancholy temperament, and capable of very deep, but not vivacious emotions, would be in stately and elaborate phrases. This style was not more distinctly a work of art than the style of Browne or Milton, but unluckily, it was a work of bad art. He had the misfortune, not so rare as it may sound, to be born in the wrong century; and is, therefore, a giant in fetters; the amplitude of stride is still there, but it is checked into mechanical regularity. A similar phenomenon is observable in other writers of the time. The blank verse of Young, for example, is generally set to Pope's tune with the omission of the rhymes; whilst Thomson, revolting more or less consciously against the canons of his time, too often falls into more pompous mouthing. Shaftesbury, in the previous generation, trying to write poetical prose, becomes as pedantic as Johnson, though in a different style; and Gibbon's mannerism is a familiar example of a similar escape from a monotonous simplicity into awkward complexity. Such writers are like men who have been chilled by what Johnson would call the "frigorific" influence of the classicism of their fathers, and whose numbed limbs move stiffly and awkwardly in a first attempt to regain the old liberty. The form, too, of the *Rambler* is unfortunate. Johnson has always Addison before his eyes; to whom it was formerly the fashion to compare him for the same excellent reason which has recently suggested comparisons between Dickens and Thackeray, namely, that their works were published in the same external shape. Unluckily, Johnson gave too much excuse for the

comparison by really imitating Addison. He has to make allegories, and to give lively sketches of feminine peculiarities, and to ridicule social foibles of which he was, at most, a distant observer. The inevitable consequence is, that though here and there we catch a glimpse of the genuine man, we are, generally, too much provoked by the awkwardness of his costume to be capable of enjoying or even reading him.

In some of his writings, however, Johnson manages, to a certain extent, to throw off these impediments. In his deep capacity for sympathy and reverence, we recognize some of the elements that go to the making of a poet. He is always a man of intuitions rather than of discursive intellect; often keen of vision, though wanting in analytical power. For poetry, indeed, as it is often understood now, or even as it was understood by Pope, he had little enough qualification. He had not the intellectual vivacity implied in the marvellously neat workmanship of Pope, and still less the delight in all natural and artistic beauty which we generally take to be essential to poetic excellence. His contempt for *Lycidas* is sufficiently significant upon that head. Still more characteristic is the incapacity to understand Spenser, which comes out incidentally in his remarks upon some of those imitations, which even in the middle of the eighteenth century showed that the sensibility to the purest form of poetry was not quite extinct amongst us. But there is a poetry, though we sometimes seem to forget it, which is the natural expression of deep moral sentiment, and of this Johnson has written enough to reveal very genuine power. The touching verses upon the death of Levett are almost as pathetic as Cowper; and fragments of the two imitations of Juvenal have struck deep enough to be not quite forgotten. We still quote the lines about pointing a moral and adorning a tale, which conclude a really noble passage. We are too often reminded of his melancholy musings over the

Fears of the brave and follies of the wise,  
and a few of the concluding lines of the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, in which he answers the question whether man must of necessity

Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate,  
in helplessness and ignorance, may have something of a familiar ring. We are to give thanks, he says,

For love, which scarce collective man can fill ;  
 For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill ;  
 For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,  
 Counts death kind nature's signal for retreat ;  
 These goods for man, the laws of heaven ordain,

These goods He grants, who grants the power  
 to gain,  
 With these celestial wisdom calms the mind,  
 And makes the happiness she does not find.

Some of these lines, if I am not mistaken, are noble in expression, as well as lofty and tender in feeling. Johnson, like Wordsworth, or even more deeply than Wordsworth, had felt all the "heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world ;" and, though he stumbles a little in the narrow limits of his versification, he bears himself nobly, and manages to put his heart into his poetry. Coleridge's paraphrase of the well-known lines, "Let observation with extensive observation, observe mankind from China to Peru," would prevent us from saying that he had shaken off his verbiage. He has not the felicity of Goldsmith's *Traveller* ; but his ponderous lines show genuine vigour, and can be excluded from poetry only by the help of an arbitrary classification.

The fullest expression, however, of Johnson's feeling is undoubtedly to be found in *Rasselas*. The inevitable comparison with Voltaire's *Candide*, which, by an odd coincidence, appeared almost simultaneously, suggests some curious reflections. The resemblance between the moral of the two books is so strong that, as Johnson remarked, it would have been difficult not to suppose that one had given a hint to the other but for the chronological difficulty. The contrast, indeed, is as marked as the likeness. *Candide* is not adapted for family reading, whereas *Rasselas* might be a textbook for young ladies studying English in a convent. *Candide*, whatever the disgust which it may cause, not only to the orthodox but to the reverent mind, is a marvel of clearness and vivacity ; whereas to read *Rasselas* is about as exhilarating as to wade knee-deep through a sandy desert. Voltaire and Johnson, however, the great sceptic and the last of the true old Tories, coincide pretty well in their view of the world, and in the remedy which they suggest. The world is, they agree, full of misery, and the optimism which would deny the reality of the misery is childish. *Il faut cultiver notre jardin* is the last word of *Candide*, and Johnson's teaching, both here and elsewhere, may be summed up in the words "Work, and don't whine."

It need not be considered here, nor, perhaps, is it quite plain, what speculative conclusions Voltaire meant to draw from his teaching. The peculiarity of Johnson is that he is apparently indifferent to any such conclusion. A dogmatic assertion that the world is on the whole a scene of misery, may be pressed into the service of different philosophies. Johnson asserted the opinion resolutely, both in writing and in conversation, but apparently never troubled himself with any inferences but such as have a directly practical tendency. He was no "speculatist" — a word which now strikes us as having an American twang, but which was familiar to the lexicographer. His only excursion to the borders of such regions was in the very forcible review of Soane Jenyns, who had made a jaunty attempt to explain the origin of evil by the help of a few of Pope's epigrams. Johnson's sledge-hammer smashes his flimsy platitudes to pieces with an energy too good for such a foe. For speculation, properly so called, there was no need. The review, like *Rasselas*, is simply a vigorous protest against the popular attempt to make things pleasant by a feeble dilution of the most watery kind of popular preaching. He has no trouble in remarking that the evils of poverty are not alleviated by calling it "want of riches," and that there is a poverty which involves want of necessities. Such consolation, indeed, came rather awkwardly from the elegant country gentleman to the poor scholar who had just known by experience what it was to live upon fourpence-halfpenny a day. Johnson resolutely looks facts in the face, and calls ugly things by their right names. Men, he tells us over and over again, are wretched, and there is no use in denying it. This doctrine appears in his familiar talk, and even in the papers which he meant to be light reading. He begins the prologue to a comedy with the words :

Pressed with the load of life, the weary mind  
 Surveys the general toil of human kind.

In the *Life of Savage* he makes the common remark that the lives of many of the greatest teachers of mankind have been miserable. The explanation to which he inclines is that they have not been more miserable than their neighbours, but that their misery has been more conspicuous. His melancholy view of life may have been caused simply by his unfortunate constitution ; for everybody sees in the disease of his own liver a disorder of the universe ; but it was also intensified



by the natural reaction of a powerful nature against the fluent optimism of the time, which expressed itself in Pope's aphorism, Whatever is, is right. The strongest men of the time revolted against that attempt to cure a deep-seated disease by a few fine speeches. The form taken by Johnson's revolt is characteristic. His nature was too tender and too manly to incline to Swift's misanthropy. Men might be wretched, but he would not therefore revile them as filthy Yahoos. He was too reverent and cared too little for abstract thought to share the scepticism of Voltaire. In this miserable world the one worthy object of ambition is to do one's duty, and the one consolation deserving the name is to be found in religion. That Johnson's religious opinions sometimes took the form of rather grotesque superstition may be true; and it is easy enough to ridicule some of its manifestations. He took the creed of his day without much examination of the evidence upon which its dogmas rested; but a writer must be thoughtless indeed who was more inclined to laugh at his superficial oddities, than to admire the reverent spirit and the brave self-respect with which he struggled through a painful life. The protest of *Rasselas* against optimism is therefore radically different from the protest of Voltaire. The Frenchman is aiming, with an irritating flippancy, though not without quick feeling, at popular theology; the Englishman desires to impress upon us the futility of all human enjoyments, with a view to deepen the solemnity of our habitual tone of thought. It is true, indeed, that the evil is dwelt upon more forcibly than the remedy. The book is all the more impressive. We are almost appalled by the gloomy strength which sees so forcibly the misery of the world and rejects so unequivocally all the palliatives of sentiment and philosophy. The melancholy is intensified by the ponderous style, which suggests a man weary of a heavy burden. The air seems to be filled with what Johnson once called "insipissated gloom." *Rasselas*, one may say, has a narrow escape of being a great book, though it is ill calculated for the hasty readers of to-day. Indeed, the defects are serious enough. The class of writing to which it belongs demands a certain dramatic picturesqueness to point the moral effectively. Not only the long-winded sentences, but the slow evolution of thought and the deliberation with which he works out his pictures of

misery, make the general effect dull beside such books as *Candide* or *Gulliver's Travels*. A touch of epigrammatic exaggeration is very much needed; and yet anybody who has the courage to read it through will admit that Johnson is not an unworthy guide into those gloomy regions of imagination, which we all visit sometimes, and which it is as well to visit in good company.

After his fashion, Johnson is a fair representative of Greatheart. His melancholy is distinguished from that of feeble men by the strength of the conviction that "it will do no good to whine." We know his view of the great prophet of the Revolutionary School. "Rousseau," he said, to Boswell's astonishment, "is a very bad man. I would sooner sign a sentence for his transportation than that of any felon who has gone from the Old Bailey these many years. Yes, I should like to have him work in the plantations." That is a fine specimen of the good Johnsonese prejudices of which we hear so much; and, of course, it is easy to infer that Johnson was an ignorant bigot, who had not in any degree taken the measure of the great moving forces of his time. Nothing, indeed, can be surer than that Johnson cared very little for the new gospel of the rights of man. His truly British contempt for all such fancies ("for anything I see," he once said, "foreigners are fools") is one of his strongest characteristics. Now, Rousseau and his like took a view of the world as it was quite as melancholy as Johnson's. They inferred that it ought to be turned upside down, assured that the millennium would begin as soon as a few revolutionary dogmas were accepted. All their remedies appeared to the excellent Doctor as so much of that cant of which it was a man's first duty to clear his mind. The evils of life were far too deeply seated to be caused or cured by kings or demagogues. One of the most popular commonplaces of the day was the mischief of luxury. That we were all on the high road to ruin on account of our wealth, our corruption, and the growth of the national debt, was the text of any number of political agitators. The whole of this talk was, to his mind, so much whining and cant. Luxury did no harm, and the mass of the people, as indeed was in one sense obvious enough, had only too little of it. The pet "state of nature" of theorists was a silly figment. The genuine savage was little better than an animal; and a savage woman, whose contempt for civil-



ized life had prompted her to escape to the forest, was simply a "speaking cat." The natural equality of mankind was mere moonshine. So far is it from being true, he says, that no two people can be together for half an hour without one acquiring an evident superiority over the other. Subordination is an essential element of human happiness. A Whig stinks in his nostrils because to his eye modern Whiggism is "a negation of all principles." As he said of Priestley's writings, it unsettles everything and settles nothing. "He is a cursed Whig, a *bottomless* Whig as they all are now," was his description apparently of Burke. Order, in fact, is a vital necessity; what particular form it may take matters comparatively little; and therefore all revolutionary dogmas were chimerical as an attack upon the inevitable conditions of life and mischievous so far as productive of useless discontent. We need not ask what mixture of truth and falsehood there may be in these principles. Of course, a Radical, or even a respectable Whig, like Macaulay, who believed in the magical efficacy of the British Constitution, might shriek or laugh at such doctrine. Johnson's political pamphlets, besides the defects natural to a writer who was only a politician by accident, advocate the most retrograde doctrines. Nobody at the present day thinks that the Stamp Act was an admirable or justifiable measure; or would approve of telling the Americans that they ought to have been grateful for their long exemption instead of indignant at the imposition. "We do not put a calf into the plough; we wait till he is an ox"—was not a judicious taunt. He was utterly wrong; and, if everybody who is utterly wrong in a political controversy deserves unmixed contempt, there is no more to be said for him. We might indeed argue that Johnson was in some ways entitled to the sympathy of enlightened people. His hatred of the Americans was complicated by his hatred of slave-owners. He anticipated Lincoln in proposing the emancipation of the negroes as a military measure. His uniform hatred for the slave trade scandalized poor Boswell, who held that its abolition would be equivalent to "shutting the gates of mercy on mankind." His language about the blundering tyranny of the English rule in Ireland would satisfy Mr. Froude, though he would hardly have loved a Home Ruler. He denounces the frequency of capital punishment and the

harshness of imprisonment for debt, and he invokes a compassionate treatment of the outcasts of our streets as warmly as the more sentimental Goldsmith. His conservatism may be at times obtuse, but it is never of the cynical variety. He hates cruelty and injustice as righteously as he hates anarchy. Indeed, Johnson's contempt for mouthing agitators of the Wilkes and Junius variety is one which may be shared by most thinkers who would not accept his principles. There is a vigorous passage in the *False Alarm* which is scarcely unjust to the patriots of the day. He describes the mode in which petitions are generally got up. They are sent from town to town, and the people flock to see what is to be sent to the king. "One man signs because he hates the Papists; another because he has vowed destruction to the turnpikes; one because it will vex the parson; another because he owes his landlord nothing; one because he is rich; another because he is poor; one to show that he is not afraid, and another to show that he can write." The people, he thinks, are as well off as they are likely to be under any form of government; and grievances about general warrants or the rights of juries in libel cases are not really felt so long as they have enough to eat and drink and wear. The error, we may probably say, was less in the contempt for a very shallow agitation than in the want of perception that deeper causes of discontent were accumulating in the background. Wilkes in himself was a worthless demagogue; but Wilkes was the straw carried by the rising tide of revolutionary sentiment, to which Johnson was entirely blind. Yet whatever we may think of his political philosophy, the value of these solid sturdy prejudices is undeniable. To the fact that Johnson was the typical representative of a large class of Englishmen we owe it that the Society of Rights did not develop into a Jacobin Club. The fine phrases on which Frenchmen became intoxicated never turned the heads of men impervious to abstract theories and incapable of dropping substances for shadows. There are evils in each temperament; but it is as well that some men should carry into politics that rooted contempt for whining which lay so deep in Johnson's nature. He scorned the sickness of the Rousseau school as, in spite of his constitutional melancholy, he scorned valetudinarianism whether of the bodily or the spiritual order. He saw evil enough in the world to be heartily,

at times too roughly, impatient of all fine ladies who made a luxury of grief or of demagogues who shrieked about theoretical grievances which did not sensibly affect the happiness of one man in a thousand. The lady would not have time to nurse her sorrows if she had been a washerwoman; the grievances with which the demagogues yelled themselves hoarse could hardly be distinguished amidst the sorrows of the vast majority condemned to keep starvation at bay by unceasing labour. His incapacity for speculation makes his pamphlets worthless beside Burke's philosophical discourses; but the treatment, if wrong and defective on the theoretical side, is never contemptible. Here, as elsewhere, he judges by his intuitive aversions. He rejects too hastily whatever seems insipid or ill-flavoured to his spiritual appetite. Like all the shrewd and sensible part of mankind, he condemns as mere moonshine what may be really the first faint dawn of a new daylight. But then his intuitions are noble, and his fundamental belief is the vital importance of order, of religion, and of morality, coupled with a profound conviction, surely not erroneous, that the chief sources of human suffering lie far deeper than any of the remedies proposed by constitution-mongers and fluent theorists. The literary version of these prejudices, or principles, is given most explicitly in the *Lives of the Poets*—the book which is now the most readable of Johnson's performances, and which most frequently recalls his conversational style. Indeed, it is an admirable book in its way, and but for one or two defects might enjoy a much more decided vitality. It is full of shrewd sense and righteous as well as keen estimates of men and things. The *Life of Savage*, written in earlier times, is the best existing portrait of that large class of authors who, in Johnson's phrase, "hung loose upon society" in the days of the Georges. The lives of Pope, Dryden, and others have scarcely been superseded, though much fuller information has since come to light; and they are all well worth reading. But the criticism, like the politics, is woefully out of date. Johnson's division between the shams and the realities deserves all respect in both cases, but in both cases he puts many things on the wrong side of the dividing line. His hearty contempt for sham pastorals and sham love-poetry will be probably shared by modern readers. "Who will hear of sheep and goats and myrtle bowers and

purling rivulets through five acts? Such scenes please barbarians in the dawn of literature, and children in the dawn of life; but will be for the most part thrown away as men grow wise and nations grow learned." But elsewhere he blunders into terrible misapprehensions. Where he errs by simply repeating the accepted rules of the Pope school, he for once talks mere second-hand nonsense. But his independent judgments are interesting even when erroneous. His unlucky assault upon *Lycidas*, already noticed, is generally dismissed with a pitying shrug of the shoulders. "Among the flocks and copses and flowers appear the heathen deities; Jove and Phœbus, Neptune and Æolus, with a long train of mythological imagery, such as a college easily supplies. Nothing can less display knowledge, or less exercise invention, than to tell how a shepherd has lost his companion, and must now feed his flocks alone; how one god asks another god what has become of *Lycidas*, and how neither god can tell. He who thus grieves can excite no sympathy, he who thus praises will confer no honour."

Of course every tyro in criticism has his answer ready; he can discourse about the æsthetic tendencies of the *Renaissance* period, and explain the necessity of placing oneself at a writer's point of view, and entering into the spirit of the time. He will add, perhaps, that *Lycidas* is a test of poetical feeling, and that he who does not appreciate its exquisite melody has no music in his soul. The same writer who will tell us all this, and doubtless with perfect truth, would probably have adopted Pope or Johnson's theory with equal confidence if he had lived in the last century. *Lycidas* repelled Johnson by incongruities, which from his point of view were certainly offensive. Most modern readers, I will venture to suggest, feel the same annoyances, though they have not the courage to avow them freely. If poetry is to be judged exclusively by the simplicity and force with which it expresses sincere emotion, *Lycidas* would hardly convince us of Milton's profound sorrow for the death of King, and must be condemned accordingly. To the purely pictorial or musical effects of a poem Johnson was nearly blind; but that need not suggest a doubt as to the sincerity of his love for the poetry which came within the range of his own sympathies. Every critic is in effect criticising himself as well as his author; and I confess that to my mind an obviously sincere

record of impressions, however onesided they may be, is infinitely refreshing, as revealing at least the honesty of the writer. The ordinary run of criticism generally implies nothing but the extreme desire of the author to show that he is open to the very last new literary fashion. I should welcome a good assault upon Shakespeare which was not prompted by a love of singularity; and there are half-a-dozen popular idols—I have not the courage to name them—upon whom I could witness a genuine attack with entire equanimity, not to say some complacency. If Johnson's blunder in this case implied sheer stupidity, one can only say that honest stupidity is a much better thing than clever insincerity or fluent repetition of second-hand dogmas. But in fact this dislike of *Lycidas*, and a good many instances of critical incapacity might be added, is merely a misapplication of a very sound principle. The hatred of cant and humbug and affectation of all vanity is a most salutary ingredient even in poetical criticism. Johnson, with his natural ignorance of that historical method, the exaltation of which threatens to become a part of our contemporary cant, made the pardonable blunder of supposing that what would have been gross affectation in Gray must have been affectation in Milton. His ear had been too much corrupted by the contemporary school to enable him to recognize beauties which would even have shone through some conscious affectation. He had the rare courage—for, even then, Milton was one of the tabooed poets—to say what he thought as forcibly as he could say it; and he has suffered the natural punishment of plain speaking. It must, of course, be admitted that a book embodying such principles is doomed to become more or less obsolete, like his political pamphlets. And yet, as significant of the writer's own character, as containing many passages of sound judgment, expressed in forcible language, it is still, though not a great book, really impressive within the limits of its capacity.

After this imperfect survey of Johnson's writings, it only remains to be noticed that all the most prominent peculiarities are the very same which give interest to his spoken utterances. The doctrine is the same, though the preacher's manner has changed. His melancholy is not so heavy-eyed and depressing in his talk, for we catch him at moments of excitement; but it is there,

and sometimes burst out emphatically and unexpectedly. The prospect of death often clouds his mind, and he bursts into tears when he thinks of his past sufferings. His sacred love of truth and uncompromising hatred of cant in all its innumerable transmutations, prompts half his most characteristic sayings. His queer prejudices take a humorous form and give a delightful zest to his conversation. His contempt for abstract speculation comes out when he vanquishes Berkeley, not with a grin, but by "striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone." His arguments, indeed, never seem to have owed much to what is generally meant by logic. He scarcely waits till his pistol misses fire to knock you down with the butt-end. The merit of his best sayings is not that they compress an argument into a phrase, but that they are vivid expressions of an intuitive judgment. In other words, they are always humorous rather than witty. He holds his own belief with so vigorous a grasp that all argumentative devices for loosening it seem to be thrown away. As Boswell says, he is through your body in an instant without any preliminary parade; he gives a deadly lunge, but cares little for skill of fence. "We know we are free and there's an end of it" is his characteristic summary of a perplexed bit of metaphysics; and he would evidently have no patience to wander through the labyrinths in which men like Jonathan Edwards delighted to perplex themselves. We should have been glad to see a fuller report of one of those conversations in which Burke "wound into a subject like a serpent," and contrast his method with Johnson's downright hitting. Boswell had not the power, even if he had the will, to give an adequate account of such a "wit combat."

That such a mind should express itself most forcibly in speech is intelligible enough. Conversation was to him not merely a contest, but a means of escape from himself. "I may be cracking my joke," he said to Boswell, "and cursing the sun: Sun, how I hate thy beams!" The phrase sounds exaggerated, but it was apparently his settled conviction that the only remedy for melancholy, except indeed the religious remedy, was in hard work or in the rapture of conversational strife. His little circle of friends called forth his humour as the House of Commons excited Chatham's eloquence; and both of them were inclined to mouth too much when deprived of the necessary

stimulus. Chathan's set speeches were as pompous as Johnson's deliberate writing. They resemble the chemical bodies which acquire entirely new properties when raised beyond a certain degree of temperature. Indeed, we frequently meet touches of the conversational Johnson in his controversial writing. *Taxation no Tyranny* is at moments almost as pithy as Swift, though the style is never so simple. The celebrated Letter to Chesterfield, and the letter in which he tells MacPherson that he will not be "deterred from detecting what he thinks a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian," are as good specimens of the smashing repartee as anything in Boswell's reports. Nor, indeed, does his pomposity sink to mere verbiage so often as might be supposed. It is by no means easy to translate his ponderous phrases into simple words without losing some of their meaning. The structure of the sentences is compact, though they are too elaborately balanced and stuffed with superfluous antitheses. The language might be simpler, but it is not a mere sham aggregation of words. His written style, however faulty in other respects, is neither slipshod nor ambiguous, and passes into his conversational style by imperceptible degrees. The radical identity is intelligible, though the superficial context is certainly curious. We may perhaps say that his century, unfavourable to him as a writer, gave just what he required for talking. If, as is sometimes said, the art of conversation is disappearing, it is because society has become too large and diffuse. The good talker, as, indeed, the good artist of every kind, depends upon the tacit co-operation of the social medium. The chorus, as, indeed, Johnson has shown very well in one of the *Ramblers*, is quite as essential as the main performer. Nobody talks well in London, because everybody has constantly to meet a fresh set of interlocutors, and is as much put out as a musician who has to be always learning a new instrument. A literary dictator has ceased to be a possibility, so far as direct personal influence is concerned. In the club Johnson knew how every blow would tell, and in the rapid thrust and parry dropped the heavy style which muffled his utterances in print. He had to deal with concrete illustrations, instead of expanding into platitudinous generalities. The obsolete theories which impair the value of his criticism and his politics, become amusing in the form of pithy sayings, though

they weary us when asserted in new expositions. His greatest literary effort, the *Dictionary*, has of necessity become antiquated in use, and, in spite of the intellectual vigour indicated, can hardly be commended for popular reading. And thus but for the inimitable Boswell, it must be admitted that Johnson would probably have sunk very deeply into oblivion. A few good sayings would have been preserved by Mrs. Thrale and others, or have been handed down by tradition, and doubtless assigned in process of time to Sydney Smith and other conversational celebrities. A few couplets from the *Vanity of Human Wishes* would not yet have been submerged, and curious readers would have recognized the power of *Rasselas*, and been delighted with some shrewd touches in the *Lives of the Poets*. But with all desire to magnify critical insight, it must be admitted that that man would have shown singular penetration, and been regarded as an eccentric commentator, who had divined the humour and the fervour of mind which lay hid in the remains of the huge lexicographer. And yet when we have once recognized his power, we can see it everywhere indicated in his writings, though by an unfortunate fatality the style or the substance was always so deeply affected by the faults of the time, that the product is never thoroughly sound. His tenacious conservatism caused him to cling to decaying materials for the want of anything better, and he has suffered the natural penalty. He was a great force wasted, so far as literature was concerned, because the fashionable costume of the day hampered the free exercise of his powers, and because the only creeds to which he could attach himself were in the phase of decline and inanition. A century earlier or later he might have succeeded in expressing himself through books as well as through his talk; but it is not given to us to choose the time of our birth, and some very awkward consequences follow.

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From Blackwood's Magazine.

#### DISORDER IN DREAMLAND.

##### PART III.

"IT must have been just an accidental meeting," said the curate. "They must have come up at the same moment to speak to Mr. Pound. People are always wanting something of him."



"No," said Lydia, "that wasn't it, I'm sure. I saw them ride into the town together, without doubt. What on earth can have brought them into company?"

"Oh, some odd chance or other. Is the thing worth noticing?"

"Not if Miss Fulford speaks of it herself. We shall see. Perhaps she will explain all about it. It is odd, isn't it?"

Miss Fulford, as we have seen, did not speak of the matter herself. She was annoyed at it having occurred, and she believed that nobody had noticed it; so she was glad to banish it from her thoughts. Mr. Saunders, on the contrary, saw in this incident his good fortune working its way to the fulfilment of his desires. "To think now," said he to himself, "of my actually riding alone with her for three or four miles, and attending of her to the little inn! This is getting on at a great pace: she'll get over her shyness after a bit; if I should have the luck to meet her once or twice more. I'm awake." And he was silly enough to talk to one or two of his associates about having ridden with Miss Fulford, suppressing the circumstances to which the ride was due, so as to make them open their eyes wide and say to one another after he left them, "My eye! Ben's a gettin' on, isn't he? he'll be to court next; clever chap, Ben."

It was about this time that I sat, one evening, at a meeting of the club, apart on a sofa with the curate, neither of us caring to play cards. We were talking of the strange coincidences that happen in this world, and then it was that Norcott confided to me that curious story of Lieutenant Hardinge's dream. I thought it one of the most remarkable things I had ever heard, and said I should like to make a note of the particulars to keep by me. I knew the Plymouth Hotel well, and asked whether the curate could give the number of the room, which he said was 26, Hardinge having once or twice named the number, as if impressing it on his own memory, and saying, "It's the number of the Cameronians: I shall recollect it by that." I observed that these foreshadowings, or warnings, or whatever they were, certainly passed our comprehension; when Saunders, who had been lounging opposite to us, apparently studying a sporting paper, jumped up at my words, and came across towards us, asking if we were talking about visions and prophecies, and what they were, as he took a deep interest in such matters. Of course we were not in-

clined to tell him of the story, to renew his grief, so the curate put him off by saying that we had been discussing a certain dream which had been remarkably and exactly fulfilled. "Fulfilled, eh?" answered he, little imagining what the subject of the dream was. "You know instances, then, of dreams having been exactly fulfilled: good. I have no doubt they come quite true sometimes. I could tell, if I liked, of a very odd dream that seems likely to come to pass, only they say you spoil all if you tell it." Of course I know now what was then in Mr. Benjamin's mind.

Admiral Tautbrace was very fond of his garden. He understood gardening, and worked himself at it a part of most days on which he was free of engagements. He employed as his assistant a queer old fellow, who was quite a character in the neighbourhood,—observant, shrewd, droll after his fashion, and quick at repartee. Uncle \* Jack Varco—or old Plummybag, as he was profanely called, because "plum" means soft, as an air-cushion, risen-bread, &c., and Uncle Jack had been afflicted with dropsy soon after his conversion—rejoiced in the reputation of having been somewhat of a reprobate in time past; but in my recollection he had been a saint—a liberal saint, that is, for he still enjoyed his joke, did not pull long faces, and was not particularly hard on his neighbours save in the way of sarcasm, to which he had always been addicted, even in his carnal days. The religious denominations down there in the west might say, as the evil spirits did, that their name is legion, for they are many. Uncle Jack's persuasion called itself *Bri-enite*, after one O'Brien, its founder. Sailors when on shore, I have observed, dislike constrained intercourse with inferiors (of which they have more than enough, perhaps, on the quarter-deck), and take to these privileged oddities, with whom they can be familiar without loss of dignity. The two were very busy one day among the beds, and Uncle Jack, having made mention of "Thicky there, Saunders's boey," as he irreverently termed our friend Benjamin, said, "What do 'ee think I heard about en, then, sir?"

"Infernal young cub! how should I know? Well, what did you hear, Jack?"

\* I have met many countrymen who supposed that to call elderly people *Uncle* and *Annet* was an American invention. Those who are acquainted with the southwestern peninsula of this island must know very well from whence the Americans derived the custom.



"I should say before telling of it, that it didn't come from no reliable witness, and if there was only Tommy Triggs's word for it, I shouldn't ha' believed it."

"Who the Hades (?) is Tommy Triggs?"

"My dear, I'm afeared you've a named the very place where they could tell 'ee most about en. He's a fine carriter that there Tommy. Whipped he've a been, and caged and ironed, to say nothin' of a short visit to Buttiney Bay along of a hoss job. There's little he dothn't know."

"Rascal! and there's something else about him, Jack, that I know without your telling me."

"What's that, my dear?"

"Why, I'll answer for it, that with all those accomplishments, the fellow's been a Brienite preacher."

"Can't say, my dear, whe'er a was or not, or whe'er a had any religion at all. What I do know of en is that a was once the Cap'n of a man-o'-war: easier to understand that than his bein' of a preacher."

"Easier to understand that, you old villain! What the devil do you mean?"

"My dear, I knows nothin' of myself, how should I? but I've heerd say, perhaps ontruly, that some of 'em wull cuss and swear, and call names like troopers, and be guilty of much profaneness: now that's exactly Tom Triggs's carriter."

"Hark ye, Uncle Jack, you'll do well to keep those sentiments for the shore; for I'll be" (something) "if you wouldn't get your old back well scored afloat if you talked in that impudent way."

"Likely I might. I've a been a-ship-board, and know somethin' of the doings."

"Convict vessel?"

"No, measter, no. What I've a seed hev been in a very humble way. I never persoomed to make out that us had a sailed together—me and Tommy, I means, of kewe."

"I daresay, bless you. But now about this rascal, this Mr. Triggs."

"Well, this rascal, as you calls en—unfortunate sinner, as I calls en—was a drinkin' last Friday arternoon to Hannah Sibley's, dreë mile out upon the Slushton road, and he saith he seed Miss Gartrude, you know, the young mistuss" (winking and pointing his finger over his shoulder towards Colkaton)—

"He saw, and be dashed (?) to him! Well, yes, yes; what did the fellow see?"

"I was agwain to tell 'ee, onny you stopped me. The fella said that he seed the young lady (dear sweet maiden her is, tew, I vow to gewdness) —"

"Get on, old man—go ahead, make sail, will you?"

"I wull, if you'll leave me to, except making sails, which I can't do; I wish I could. St. Paul, you know —"

"Bless St. Paul! You're doing this on purpose, you old rascal!" (Then, *calming himself with a great effort*)—

"Now, I say, Uncle Jack, let's have it; that's a good man."

"My, my! I hope you'll be forgove. Well, a said he seed Miss Gartrude out there a-ridin' with young Benny—onny they two."

"An infernal lying villain! How could you think of repeating such an infamous story?"

"Upon Tommy's word, sartainly, 'twasn't worthy to be tould again; but I understand the young sprig hisself hev a been sayin' somethin' of the same soart."

"He has, has he? Then he stands as good a chance of a rope's-ending as any man between the four seas. An impudent —" (a few choice imprecations, the details of which are not suited to these pages).

Immediately after the above conversation, the flag-officer, firing minute oaths, retired into the house, while old Plummy-bag let his countenance relax into a grin that might have belonged to a hearty laugh, but was not attended by any sound whatever.

As he doffed his garden dress, and rigged himself, as he called it, for town, it occurred to Admiral Tautrace that his position in entering into judgment with Mr. Saunders would be much strengthened if he had some accurate information as to the real facts. These could be ascertained nowhere so well as at Colkaton; and he was glad of an excuse for calling there. Thither, accordingly, he first took his way; and there he found the ladies much out of sorts, the younger one especially so, who had learned from Miss Tarraway's innuendos rather than her words that she was acquainted with the adventure, and who had been made aware of this annoying fact at a time and in a company when and where it was impossible to reply or explain. Indeed Gertrude was greatly mortified and very angry. There was no need for the Admiral to beat cautiously about, for the ladies were only too glad to unburden themselves of their grief, and to tell him the whole story of the affair as it really occurred. He had heard of Corder's accident, but not of the attendant circumstances: now he under-

stood the whole matter, and would take care that people whose opinion was worth anything should understand it too. Not knowing how Lydia had come by her imperfect information, he thought the whole gossip was owing to Mr. Saunders's indiscreet boasting. So he took his leave, saying that he would go now and take steps for having a proper version of the tale put in circulation, and quietly intending to go also and administer a caution to the offender. He called on the clergyman of the parish, on the curate, and on one or two other persons who possessed either local influence or long tongues, and gave the proper version of the story, not without inveighing against Mr. Benjamin Saunders's idiotic vanity, and hinting at the retribution which was probably in store for him. Some of the persons whom he went to enlighten had never heard the story at all; but among those who had heard it was Mr. Norcott, who felt himself guilty, not for having spoken of the subject, or having even imagined that there could be anything in it worth speaking about, but because he had too quietly permitted Miss Tarroway to deceive herself (so the honest fellow put it) as to its having been other than one of the most simple of accidents. He never thought of blaming Lydia, to whose weaknesses he was getting particularly blind. The Admiral then took his way towards the large gates, over which were written on a great wooden arch that spanned the entrance, *Saunders, Stone-Mason, Brick-layer, Builder, and Contractor*, and stepped into the little office adjacent thereto, where he saw Mr. Benjamin behind the desk, having some earnest business talk with a gentleman of the town who stood outside the same desk, and John Bray, the foreman, who was in attendance. On observing who it was that darkened the doorway, Ben came smirking forward, requested the Admiral to take a seat, and he would have the pleasure of taking his orders in a very few minutes; but the Admiral said there was no hurry; he had a short business to do elsewhere, and would return; so he went out again, rather to Ben's disappointment, who thought perhaps he might forget to call again, or be prevented from doing so. There was, however, no danger of his forgetting; only as he had now ascertained that Mr. Saunders was within his reach, which he had feared might not be the case, he thought he would take a turn or two outside, measure the young man's offence, and consider how he should be

dealt with. Some people would have looked into these little matters before seeking the delinquent, but that was not the Admiral's way. A little reflection showed him that Ben had been guilty of only indiscretion, or at the worst of a suppression of the truth, and that he had been indulging his vanity without any bad intention. He therefore did the great violence to his feelings of putting aside the idea of rope's-ending. "No," said he to himself, enjoying the consciousness of his clemency, which he didn't think ten men in the whole service would have the magnanimity to imitate — "No, by George (?), I'll only give the whelp a little wholesome advice; speak to him like a father this time, and if that doesn't do —" he didn't finish the sentence, but closed his fist upon his baton, and made it quiver a little in his grasp.

"Ah, are you desengaged now, youngster?" inquired he, as he entered the office the second time. Benjamin rubbed his hands, and said he was quite at the Admiral's orders, again offering a seat.

"Then just let your mate or whatever he may be go for'ard — get out of this, I mean — for I want to say a few words to you in private."

John Bray raised his eyebrows at this, and thought it looked mysterious; he took his departure, however. Ben began to experience a disagreeable sensation, as if this pointed to a different kind of business from what he had expected.

"Now look you, my friend," began the Admiral. "I understand that your good fortune — your *devilish* good fortune, mind you — caused you to render a small service the other day to a young lady whose groom met with an accident. You know."

Ben's apprehension turned suddenly to delight. Could the Admiral possibly have come as an ambassador to open negotiations that might lead to the fulfilment of the dream? This did indeed look promising. Ben simply bowed in acknowledgment that he had done his *devoir*, as imputed.

"Then don't interrupt me, sir. Zounds, I say sir, don't interrupt me. You've been lubber enough to speak of your ride home as if it hadn't been the result of an accident, but something in the way of your ordinary privilege, haven't you? (*faint effort on Mr. Saunders's part to say something in mitigation.*) Not a word, sir — not a word; you know you did. Now my first impression, when I heard of this, was that it was impertinence, and,

by George, sir, if — (*movement of dissent from Mr. Saunders*) — well, I am willing to believe that it was not impertinence, only folly, blest folly, which perhaps you were not aware of; I hope not. But now that I've made you understand what an ass you are, what an idiotical conceited puppy you are justly called, I trust it will operate as a caution to you as long as you live, not to speak of gentlewomen except with the profoundest respect — the profoundest respect, do you hear?"

"Really, Admiral Tautbrance," — Ben was beginning in an indignant strain.

"Silence, sir; don't attempt to answer. If I'd ordered you four dozen — that is, I mean, if you'd been severely trounced (you understand me), there might have been some reason for singing out, although men of any mettle are not much given to bleating under punishment; but I've chosen to deal with this case mildly — by yea and nay, mildly. Good day, sir; good day. I hope I shan't have to repent of my humanity. Don't drive me to be a savage against my nature."

As the Admiral strode out of the office, striking his stick upon the floor, uttering from his nostrils breath that was red-hot if it had not burst into flame, and looking the very picture of mild benevolence, he came against John Bray in the porch, who didn't appear to have withdrawn himself to any great distance. John sprang out of the path of the meek old sailor as if the latter had been a steam-engine at full speed, and presently re-entered the office, where he found his chief greatly disconcerted, and not a bit soothed by the suspicion that his foreman had overheard the — no, *not* the dialogue.

"That be a limb,\* ben't a?" said John, as he came in. "Soart uv a chap now, that ef he was upun the one side uv a hadge I wud sewnder be upun the tether; speak'th to we like as ef us was brewt beastisses, doan't a?"

"An old man, John," answered Ben. "People have spoiled him by humouring of him. I was half a mind to serve him properly, and let the daylight through him. Bless him, the old tyrant, but I don't think he meant half that he said, you know. If I'd punished him for his hectoring, the old fool, I should have been sorry afterwards, perhaps."

"Es, I reckon yew wew'd," replied John.

Ben, he it remarked, was not thought to be deficient in courage; it was want of

sense and judgment that put him wrong. His father, if the old Admiral had tried to bully him, would have met the assault quietly but firmly, and in the end got the better of the peppery old sailor. But Ben, although he may have been up to hitting out, had no other resource, and personal violence, he instinctively felt, was not the right thing in this place. It was an attack against which he was not prepared with any defence. He felt rather guilty, too, being aware that he had made his remarks in such a way as not to convey exactly the whole truth; and yet, indeed, nothing that he said would have been much noticed by any one if his words had not been so ably supported by those of Miss Tarraway. Well, here he was in another mess, and snubbed again. He couldn't think how it was, that while some influence or other seemed to be intent on forwarding the fulfilment of his dream, some other unlucky chance brought him, out of each opportunity, mortification and discouragement.

Many people may think that the Admiral had much better have omitted his interview with Mr. Saunders. Such, however, was by no means his own opinion. Satisfied that he had done his duty, and rather proud of the calm and temperate manner in which it had been done, he took his way homewards, and thought he would look in again at Colkaton to assure the fair inhabitants that everything had been put right. He felt himself now to be commissioned in some sort as Gertrude's champion, to be wearing her favour; "and, sink me," said he to himself, "I should like to see one of these waltzing, galloping young humbugs that could dispose of a bit of business of that kind like an oldster who has some comprehension of discipline, by George!" He reported in few words the outlines of his proceedings, more to let Gertrude observe his zeal than in the way of boasting; said that all annoyance about the matter might be suffered to die away now, as he was certain that he had quite put an end to misapprehensions; received his meed of thanks, and then, like a prudent mariner, thought he would clap on all sail while the wind was fair. Accordingly, he led the conversation to his own affairs, and, with subtilty adapting his remarks to Mrs. Fulford's tastes rather than her daughter's (as he who would be master of the body of the place knows that he must first win the outworks), mentioned an interview which he had had with the "sea lord" on his recent visit to the Admiralty.

\* To wit, of Satan.

"Fine fellow, Tom Mainsplice, and, I may say, not ill disposed to your humble servant — sailed together you know; taking of Martinique — Tom's arm broke — I shot through calf of my leg; that sort of thing. He'll do me a good turn, rely upon it, if he can."

"Oho! you expect promotion, Admiral. Well, I hope with all my heart it will not be long delayed. What shall you be — a field-marshal?" said Mrs. Fulford.

"Promotion! not a bit of it. That's all right: goes by seniority, you see, now. I've been of the white two years and a half, and must be of the red soon, if the old ones go off as they are doing at present. Poor Sir Davy Dreadnought, only last week; good-service pension — one leg, and reef in right side from sabre-cut in boarding. Two or three just before him. No, I wasn't speaking of promotion; but Mainsplice gave me a whisper about the South American command being vacant shortly, and he hinted that possibly, he couldn't say for certain, mine might be one of the names submitted for it."

"Oh yes; and then, if your name were submitted?"

"If I were *selected*, you know, my flag would go up."

"Really, your flag would go up," repeated Mrs. Fulford, intensely interested, and understanding the matter of which she spoke as well as if it had been mentioned in Sanskrit. "Then you will have to get it down again!"

"No, Heaven forbid — no; if I get it up, I'll keep it flying, trust me. Sending up my flag, ma'am, means getting a command; taking my berth on board a *flag-ship* — d'ye understand?"

"Oh, I see; of course, of course." (The Misses Tautbrace were rather better up in this subject than Mrs. Fulford. The possible ascent of this flag was the constant topic of conversation when the family was alone, and came to them as regularly as their daily bread, though, I fancy they prayed less earnestly for it.)

"Well, don't you think it looks promising?" asked the Admiral.

"Oh, most hopeful — almost certain, I should say. Of course, you reminded your friend, Maysplice —"

"Mainsplice, ma'am, Mainsplice. Name that was in everybody's mouth in Jervis's days. Commanded 'Untameable Hyæna' off Cape St. Vincent."

"Of course, I meant Mallspace; the king gave him a beat, or something, I

remember. Well, you reminded your friend Mallspace, now, of that glorious, glorious conflict, of that dreadful wound in your arm?"

"Leg, ma'am, leg — and not so dreadful, neither; not even entered *severe* in doctor's report. No, Tom knows all about that, and the First Lord wouldn't know or care much about it if it was told to him. I'll tell you what I reminded him of, though; I said he must recollect that I had always voted straight since that little matter was put right about the Finisterre's prize-money; and that they'd have returned one of those confounded prying, grumbling, arithmetical rascals for Wetton last election, if I hadn't prevented it. I hinted, too, that if I was left too long ashore, I might, in a moment of forgetfulness, plump for the wrong man. *That* will give me a capital chance if Tom represents it properly."

"What! a better chance than the memory of your services and sufferings!"

"A blessed — (I beg your pardon, ladies) — a confounded sight better."

What occurred to poor Gertrude on this occasion was, that if Tom Mainsplice should only be duly impressed by his friend's merits, she might be delivered from the importunities of a suitor who was becoming troublesome, and was, in the present circumstances, particularly distasteful. But another thing had taken hold of Mrs. Fulford's mind, which had never before opened to the great possibilities of Admiral Tautbrace's position in the service — possibilities which, though they surrounded him now in only an uncorporeal and invisible state, might any day be clothed upon and take gorgeous shape. Once she conceived the new idea, she didn't do so in an imperfect way, but saw Tautbrace full-blown as Port-Admiral at Plymouth. She had been at the Admiralty House there, and seen the glories of the appointment; and to think that Admiral Tautbrace, her friend and neighbour, might be invested with these or similar glories if only Tom Mainsplice should prove an effectual advocate! She didn't know how Tom Mainsplice, and other Toms, Dicks, and Harrys, had been playing fast and loose with the Admiral for the last seven or eight years — always holding out hopes, and always finding some excuse for not realizing them!

"Jack," said the Admiral to old Plummybag next morning in the garden, "I gave a word of caution yesterday to that jackanapes, that young what's-his-name."



"Saunders's boey do 'ee mean?"

"Yes; the fellow's father was a respectable man, so I thought I wouldn't be so sharp as I intended, but speak to him mildly, as a parson or one of those people would."

"He isn't a used to sich tenderness as that. Should'n wonder now ef a never seed 'twas lovin'-kindness at all. Folks be so contrairy."

"That may be, Jack; I've often and often found that the case, but I've got used to it, and don't expect anything better. A man that expects to be appreciated will be disappointed. It's a bad world, old man—a dashed ungrateful world."

"All ignorance, my dear; they doesn't know when they'm a spoke to in that pleasant way that 'tis all for their own good."

After this occurrence the spring advanced at Wetton without incident worthy of special mention, although time was, of course, preparing events and surprises. As to the characters in this narrative, they were quietly working away, or being borne, towards their destinies. Lieutenant Hardinge was making the most of the days that remained of his country sojourn, sporting, visiting, but not making love, I am afraid. The young fellow went to Colkatton now and then with a mind perfectly easy as to the terms on which the acquaintance there was maintained, and never for an instant suspecting the flushes, tremors, palpitations, meditations, and tears to which his visits—nay, his looks, words, and gestures—gave rise. Although he had disappointed the matrimonial expectations of Wetton, he was there regarded as an unaffected, good-natured, rather pleasant fellow. His want of liveliness was set down to a reflecting mind and professional study. "A fine honourable young fellow, and a thorough soldier, I can assure you," was the testimony regarding him of the doctor of the militia, who, except for the three weeks during which the regiment was occasionally embodied, practised in the town as an ordinary surgeon, and assumed, and was allowed, to be the highest resident military authority. Hardinge had come short of the stereotyped country town idea of a young officer, all dash, brilliancy, and extravagance, and so rather disappointed the place at his advent; but when the time of his departure approached, Wetton found that it was sorry to lose him. Miss Tarroway, having obtained satisfac-

tory testimonials of Mr. Norcott, and ascertained that two of his cousins were members of Parliament (one of them a small official), also that he had a bishop for his uncle by marriage, and that there was a living in the family, no longer confined herself to tentative operations, but formally invested that young man, and sat down before him, assailing him vigorously with all the weapons of which the attack was in that day cognisant. But some innocent objector may remark, "How could curates be attacked in those days? There was no confession, no decorating of churches at all seasons of the year, no working of altar-cloths, no embroidering of stoles, no prostrations, no choirs, no schools, even, calculated to aid such designs!" Thou fool; presume thou in thy small scale of sense to weigh thy opinion, founded on the experience of a few years probably—of a generation at most—against the eternal instincts of spinsterhood expectant here on earth? Because the modern method of operating was not applicable to those days, is that a reason why there should have been no operation at all? If a modern curate in his raffish wideawake, his starched band, his bombasine waistcoat, and his straight-cut surtout, got up in imitation, as far as he dares, of a popish priest, be, in that he is a bachelor, an object of competition, why should not an ancient curate have been equally so, although *his* ambition was to form himself upon the model of a Methodist preacher? Know well, that this relation is not for an age but for all time, and that where-soever a curate (unencumbered) is, there will gentlewomen of a certain type be gathered together. In the days of Miss Tarroway's youth, Dissent was prevalent in the West of England, and zealous young clergymen beholding this result supposed it to be produced by something effective in the snuffe, the whine, the uncompromising doctrine, the exceeding plainness of worship, of attire, and of speech; and they too, being ambitious of winning souls, governed themselves accordingly, as our officials have it. They probably were not aware that the popularity of the Dissenters was simply a measure of the unpopularity of the Church of England in those parts, as represented by its older and benefited clergy. Those last-named public-spirited ministers had perceived that the people were in danger of becoming comparatively indifferent to field-sports, and of abandoning some flagrant vices, if by the in-

fluence of both precept and example such lapses were not prevented. To arrest the falling away, they, the clergymen, devoted themselves, hearts and souls, to following and recommending the sports, and practising the vices, so that men could see their works. The stiff-necked parishioners, instead of walking in the way of their pastors, ran after the Dissenters, rather to show how little feeling they had in common with their own clergy, than because ranting and howling and cushion-thumping were to their liking. But the rising generation of parsons naturally enough supposed that there was something positively attractive in the Dissenting style when so many seemed to approve it; and so they vied with each other in simplifying their churches, their services, and their attire, and in debasing their style of preaching. Lydia's leading move, which we may call the preparation for her attack, was a general intimation that she was "becoming serious." She adopted a bonnet which projected about three inches beyond the point of her nose, withdrew a good deal from carnal amusements, attended meetings of the Bible and other benevolent societies, took great interest in missions, and was deeply affected at some passages in Norcott's sermons, which forced her to raise her eyes to the preacher, unconscious of the fact that they were running over. She likewise discovered a great passion for art, especially for oil-paintings. But I wish it to be understood that Lydia did not start off suddenly from her old path to walk in wisdom's ways. It was done gradually and cleverly, so that by-and-by, when the time had come for her timidly to seek spiritual advice from the curate on one or two points, there was nothing in her doing so to excite suspicion. Lydia did, moreover, some noble deeds of charity; and although her right hand was profoundly ignorant of the benefactions of her left, and *vice versa*, the secrets of both palms somehow were revealed to Norcott. When a young clergyman begins to think of matrimony, it is comfortable to know that the object of his regard is already very much what in his opinion a clergyman's wife ought to be! There was a nice docility, too, about Lydia; she was willing to be guided by the opinions of a person whom she respected. Her features were expressive certainly, and she managed their play with great judgment. It was only lately that Norcott had become alive to the fact that her eyes when lighted up by the soul

within were perfectly splendid. But I am saying rather too much about this courtship. Poor Gertrude was decidedly out of health, lost her fresh look and her rounded form: the kind inquiries to which she was subjected vexed her, and struck a chill to her mother's heart. Pound had prescribed and supplied some abominable mixture which he called a tonic, also a box of pills. The two together were enough to produce serious disease in a healthy person, and to hurry a patient towards the grave. One or two friends, more clear-sighted than the apothecary, recommended an excursion, which he never would have suggested; but of this Gertrude wouldn't even hear at present, though she thought perhaps she might be more disposed to travel in the summer. I don't know what odd fancies didn't occur to her now. Protestant nunneries were beginning to be heard of; and she thought she would like to start a little society of *sisters of the broken heart*, or something of that sort, who would do an incalculable deal of good, and be a real blessing to mankind. She wasn't quite clear what their line would be, but she had nearly made up her mind about the bonnet of the order, a sketch of which lay for long between the leaves of her blotting-book. And even yet, that stupid fellow Hardinge would sometimes, by a thoughtless word or action, dispel for a time all the resignation, and renew the whispers of hope, even if the whispers were so low as to be almost inaudible. Admiral Tautbrace, having perceived that the mention of the flag had not been without its effects on Mrs. Fulford, took care to refer very frequently to that piece of bunting and its prospects. It had not "gone up" yet, and it had grieved Tom Mainsplice to the heart to say that the First Lord had been compelled (much against his private inclination) to bestow the South American command on another officer whose claim it was impossible to overlook. (Mainsplice did not mention that this deserving officer could influence three votes in the House of Commons; and that the last division, on a question of confidence, had been what he called a [something] near thing, by George!) Tautbrace, however, would be borne in mind, and something else would be sure to turn up before long. You couldn't call Tautbrace by any means an old man, Mrs. Fulford thought—he still possessed all the energy of youth; whatever his years were, was ready to take a command at a day's notice, was most distinguished in

his profession, and would certainly have a title some day. (This last idea the Admiral had cleverly insinuated.) Of course, Mrs. Fulford perceived that Tautbrance aspired to the honour of being her son-in-law; and although she rather hesitated about actively favouring his suit, she couldn't help reflecting sometimes that if things *should* take that turn, it might prove a tolerable dispensation.

Ben Saunders, more and more intent on effecting a rise in the world, and playing the great part assigned to him by fate, did not make himself more popular with people of his own class by his very openly exposed pretensions. He did not care much for that, though; for he found that fortune had been favouring him in more ways than he had till now been aware of—she had not only suggested a great ambition, but had bestowed some very important means of gratifying it. When the amount of the property left by his father came to be ascertained, it was found greatly to exceed the estimates of it made just after his death. The old builder had been industrious, shrewd, and frugal; his private expenditure had been a mere nothing in comparison of his income; consequently year by year he had been accumulating money, which he had put out to increase here and there, always discreetly. The deposits and investments coming to light week by week (for, as has been said, his accounts and memoranda were not of the most enlightening; moreover, his will disposed of his property in bulk almost) amounted to a handsome sum, the income derivable from which, added to the profits of the business, sufficed for a good deal of indulgence. Under pretence that his mother's spirits would never revive as long as memory should be kept awake by the daily sight of things connected with the past, Ben persuaded her to go for change of air and scene to a house situated some little way in the country, a very different residence from their old one. He announced it as a temporary arrangement, but they never returned to the old house near the building-yard. It need hardly be added, that with the new abode a new style of living was adopted, not in the best of taste, but comprehending indulgences never dreamt of in old days. Only under vehement protest did Mrs. Saunders consent to these revolutions: if she had found herself as rich as Cræsus, she would have considered it a presumption for "the likes of her" to be "eatin' with a silver fork, made for show, and quite

useless for pickin' up one's fewd, besides woundin' of the gums and tongue; and trapesin' over rich carpets and amongst fine furnitur that a body dare not tech for fear of dirtyn' of 'em." This was very unlike the feeling of her son, who believed that nothing had been, or ever would be, so made as to be worthy of being used by him. He furthered his plans very much by giving expensive dinners to such young men as he could persuade to partake of them; and I think I recollect that many of those who declined his hospitality at first were wooed by the good report of the meat and drink, and by the advice that Ben lost money at cards like a lord at Crockford's. Like many another rising man, he became insultingly cool to some of his old friends. The distant and condescending salutation which he one day gave the militia sergeant-major, whose acquaintance he had in times past looked upon as his greatest social achievement, so wounded that gallant spirit, that he was fain to compose his mind by drinking steadily for three days and three nights, during which period he revealed to his familiars how "a dirty little puppy of a mechanic" ought to be treated.

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From The Contemporary Review.  
THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES.

PREFACE.

THE famous Episode of the Shield of Achilles in Homer is in its conception alike daring and simple, in its execution alike complete and gorgeous, from the nature of the topics, and the telling sharpness of outline with which they are presented. The employment of a Divine personage as the artificer of the Shield seems to show that the design went far beyond anything which the eyes of his countrymen had been wont to view, and was in effect conceived in the mind of the Poet, not founded as a whole upon experience, and not representative of, but very much more advanced than, the Art of the period in which he lived.

This introduction of the god has the advantage, too, of enabling the Poet, without extravagance, to push to its furthest limit the *vis vivida*, the living and life-giving power, of his genius, and not only to introduce successions of events into one and the same scene, but to endow the things and persons represented with other incidents of vitality; as when

the upturned earth darkens behind the plough, and we are made to see the actual progress of the dragging of the slain out of the battle.

The Art of the Shield is in thorough consonance with the spirit of the Homeric Poems; that is to say, its basis is thoroughly human, thoroughly objective, and thoroughly realistic. It does not seek aid from the unseen; from the converse of man with his own spirit; from ideal conceptions; or even from history or legend. Human interest in the actual known human life, with its terrestrial abode, its pursuits, its simple institutions, its vicissitudes, is the keynote of the whole.

For us and for our time, it may seem that realistic means prosaic; and for corroborative emblems of this proposition may be chosen some of our statues in coat, waistcoat, and trowsers; some of our highly conventional painting; and the large measure in which our poetry, since the days of Scott and Crabbe, has quitted this field, like an animal flying from some recurrence of the glacial period in these latitudes to seek a more congenial clime. It is the voice of humanity, no longer young, which says to us,—

The things which I have seen I now can see  
no more,

and,—

I know, where'er I go,

That there hath past away a glory from the  
earth.\*

But what is flat and stale to us was intensely poetical to the youth of our world. The cup which we have drunk was but just presented to its lips. The bloom was yet on the grape, the aroma yet in the draught. The first perception of the forms of beauty seems to have a life and force for the race, as well as for the individual, which is peculiar to itself, and which cannot be retained. We may be thankful that some of it, at least, has been precipitated into palpable and lasting forms for our behoof.

It appears to me, indeed, that the genuine realism of Homer not only is observable in this famous episode, but even reaches its climax here. Never was outward Fact so glorified by the Muse. Nowhere in poetry, to my knowledge, is there such an accumulation of incidents without crowding. The king is glad as he watches his reapers and his crop; but

with this exception, there is hardly anywhere the description of a pure mental emotion. It is sometimes well to employ statistics in aid of criticism. Let us test the Shield by the number of its epithets. I have counted them, endeavouring to separate between those which belong to the *quid* from those which belong to the *quale*. The latter alone, I apprehend, are epithets proper: and I cannot reckon of these more than sixty-eight in one hundred and eighteen lines: a number surprisingly small, when it is remembered that the whole consists of strictly descriptive poetry.\*

There is, however, one point in which, above all others, the Shield of Achilles is distinguished by its daring form from most, if not all, other poetical representations of a work of art. It is the degree in which it is charged with life and activity. Of the twelve pictures descriptive of scenes familiar to the eye, almost every one contains a narrative; and this narrative is made to pass before the eye with a vivid rapidity which is alike enchanting and impressive. There is but a single exception, and it is admirably chosen: the sheep at pasture give us a piece of still life, with a subject most appropriate to the mode of representation. Even the description of the heavens is animated with the spirit of movement. Orion is watched, or waited on, by the Bear. And the moon is a filling or waxing moon. So I have translated it, in opposition to Pope and to high lexicographical authorities, after consideration, and with confidence. The genius of the present participle (*πληθουσάν*), to say the very least, seems to warrant that mode of rendering. But pictorially, I find it hard to believe that Homer meant to place a little round moon in competition with a large round sun. And, so far as poetry is concerned, it is surely in the spirit of this most animated episode to represent the moon as growing rather than as stationary in figure. We cannot fail to observe how much more this is in keeping with the Poet's treatment of the Sun. Here he has no change of shape to call in aid: so he touches him with the spark of life in another form, by calling him the unwearied Sun. This phrase at once brings before the mind his daily journey, how he climbs and then descends the heaven.

\* Wordsworth, "Ode on the Recollections of Childhood."

\* The epithets in the corresponding episode of the *Æneid*, compared with the number of lines, seem to be nearly twice as many.



Upon the whole, I would venture to submit it, for the consideration of those who have a more extensive and accurate command of poetical literature than myself, whether any poet of any age has been so hardy and so powerful as Homer in the imaginative handling of material objects of Art for the purposes of Poetry? This hardness and power of Homer unquestionably reach their climax in the "Shield."

It has already been noticed that legend does not enter into the representations of the Shield. The short roll of nascent Greek history or tradition had already, at the epoch of the Trojan War, yielded at least two great enterprises of historical interest to posterity; the voyage of the ship *Argo*, and the War of the Seven against Thebes. But it was only thus making its beginning; it perhaps was neither rich and full enough, nor as yet familiar enough to the mass, to make it more suitable for representations like that on the Shield, than the purely unattached and impersonal representations with which it is filled.

It may be also that the Eastern character, still attaching to the god-artificer Hephaistos, would have presented an incongruity in the treatment of purely national legends, which is not felt where the delineation of life, though thoroughly Greek, is still general, and where much of the subject-matter presented was probably common to Greece and to the Syrian and Assyrian East.

Virgil, on the other hand, has with perfect propriety adopted the basis of history and legend for his otherwise derivative representation of the Shield of Æneas.

But perhaps we are warranted in saying that the entire absence of tradition from the Homeric Shield not only accords with the recency of Greek national or quasi-national existence, but also with the belief that Art had not yet become, so to speak, endemic in Greece; as we may feel certain that the intense patriotism, which pervades the *Iliad*, would at a very early stage of development have impressed upon Greek art a national character by the free use of legend for the purpose.\*

The materials used in the composition of the Shield deserve notice. The metals cast into the furnace are copper, tin, gold, and silver; and in one passage we find what may be a reference to *κίβανος*, or

bronze, resulting from a mixture of tin and copper; but it is a question whether the mixed metal yielding the dark colour is intended, or the dark colour only. Nowhere else in Homer is there a reference to the making of a mixed metal. In general, to say the least, the workmanship of the Shield is employed upon the several metals, single and uncombined; and it is probable that the Poet meant, by their free intermixture, to aim at the effect of colour.\* This likelihood is confirmed by his repeated use of the word *ποικίλλω*, to variegate, which seems to be taken from the sister art of embroidery, and which is applied with a peculiar propriety to the most brilliant of all the representations, that of the Dance at the close.

The reader, even in a translation, cannot fail to observe the highly archaic picture of life, presented by the scenes upon the Shield. The scene of the trial respecting the fine for homicide belongs to a stage of society anterior to law, though forms of polity have begun to exist; and when corruption, by the receipt of gifts other than the acknowledged public premium for superior judgment, (*dorodokia*), had not yet come in. That of the harvest, where the master of the reapers is also the King, is yet nearer the patriarchal stage; but some difference is to be expected between the country and the town; which are distinct from one another in the Shield as they are also in the *Iliad*.† In no particular do the manners of the Shield appear to differ from those of the Poems generally: they are certainly not less primitive.

In the main it may be said, as to the subject-matter of the episode, that the Poet represents, upon the surface offered by the great defensive weapon of the Warrior, first, through its outline, a figure of the universe, such as he conceived it; secondly, a collection of all those scenes and events of human life, which were at once the most stirring, the most familiar, and the most important.

A question may be raised, whether we ought to conceive of the form of the Shield as oblong, or as round. This is not the place for a discussion on the subject: no epithet is used, in the description of the process of manufacture, which determines it; but I have taken the Shield to be oblong; and I may observe

\* I may refer to Mr. A. S. Murray on the Homeric Question, *CONTEMPORARY REVIEW*, January, 1874, p. 239.

\* See Pope's Observations on the Shield, following his 18th book. But he goes greatly beyond what I have stated.

† Il. xxiii. 835.

that Pope, who treats it as round, in reliance apparently upon an erroneous rendering of a word (*κύκλος*), assumes for it a diameter of no less than four feet.\*

It is probable that the boss in the middle was meant, in the Poet's mind, to afford space and a suitable shape for the representation of the vault of heaven.

The scenes wrought upon the Shield are as follows : —

1. The Earth, Sea, and Heavenly bodies.
2. In a city at peace, we have
  - a. Marriage processions and festivities :
  - b. A judicial suit, tried by the people, under the presidency of the Elders.
3. In a city at war, —
  - a. A scene before the ramparts :
  - b. An ambush and surprise :
  - c. A bloody fight.
4. The ploughing of a field.
5. The harvest, and the meal in preparation.
6. The vintage, with music, and march (or something more than march) to time of the vintagers.
7. A herd of cattle attacked by lions.
8. Sheep at pasture, and their folds.
9. The Dance.
10. The great Ocean River, encompassing the whole ; as, in the mind of Homer, it encompassed the surface of the Earth.

The two grand over-ruling conditions of human life, and the prevailing and elementary pursuits of human industry, are thus placed before us with a remarkable comprehensiveness. We see Peril and Safety, Stir and Calm, Toil and Pleasure ; the repast prepared to reward the one, music and movement enlivening the other.

The alternations of the scenes are both skilful and studied. From the bloody fight we pass to the activity of peaceful industry ; from the furious assault of the lions to the deep repose of the pasturing flocks ; and from these again to the rapid and sparkling animation of the dance.

We may however remark upon what the Shield does not contain as well as on what it does. We do not find on it any scene of

1. Navigation :
2. Hunting :
3. Any domestic art or trade :
4. Religious rite or observance.

As to the first, it is plain from the Poems generally, that Navigation had not

yet become a characteristic or familiar feature of Greek life. We hear nowhere of a trading-ship, except in connection with the Phœnicians.

As to the second, we must bear in mind that the hunting of the Homeric times was not a pastime, but a pursuit of direct utility, intended to rid the land of a nuisance, and to provide for the safety of property. When it is thus viewed, we have the substance of hunting given us in the singularly animated scene of the lions and the bull.

With respect to the third head, we may bear in mind that the useful arts of the period were for the most part homely, sedentary, and single-handed. Even for his similes, Homer has but little employed them : much less could they come up to the dignity of these more stirring exhibitions of life. Even the combined labour of the damsels in the Palace of Alkinoos — the only instance given us in the Poem of such combination — would have supplied but a tame and poor picture for the Shield. Moreover it is rather a Phœnician, than a Greek picture.

The absence of any scene representing the rites and observances of religion, opens much wider questions.

The great and standing institution of ancient religion was sacrifice.

We have this in Homer as associated with particular places, like the grove and fountain of the Nymphs near the town of Ithaka ;\* or with rare and solemn occasions, like the hecatomb to Apollo in the First Iliad,† and the sacrifice of Agamemnon in the Third.‡ Lastly, it is an incident of the common meal, as we see both in other places, and in this very description, where the Heralds had "sacrificed," that is, had killed and cooked a great ox for the meal of the reapers. None of these three occasions of sacrifice were available for a prominent position on the surface of the Shield : the first and second, because they were occasional, not ordinary ; the third, because it could not command the requisite breadth and liveliness of interest as a separate or special subject. In truth, the observances of religion filled no large place in the Greek mind, even in the Homeric times. And this leads to a wider form and scope of observation. We find here, in this extraordinary poetic achievement of Homer, an early indication, an embryo, so to

\* Od. xvii. 204-11.

† Il. i. 446.

‡ Il. iii. 264.

\* Observations, &c.

speak, of that principle which was to reach its fullest manifestation in the Greek of the classical period, the principle of the sufficiency of this, our human, earthly life; without any capital regard to what is before us in futurity, or what is above and around us in the unseen world. Hence the Shield contains no Birth, and no Funeral, of man. The beginning and the end of life are endowed for Christians with so intense an interest, that we are apt to forget how different an aspect they offered to those beyond the pale. Both of them are swathed in weakness or distress, and the Greek had no charm in his possession which could invest distress and weakness with beauty, or infuse into them the glow of life. Sorrow had not yet been glorified. Scenes like these, he would say, do not make up the completeness of life, but impair it: they are not to be acknowledged as legitimately belonging to it; we submit to them, for we cannot help submitting; but they form no portion of our glory, and we put them out of sight.

Fulness of energy in the powers of body and mind, and fulness of delight following their exercise; action rewarded in itself, and sustained by this reward; a sphere bright, brilliant, bounded, self-contained, self-supported, full of all things glorious, beautiful, and strong; such was the aim of life for the Greek, and all that tended to break and banish the illusion was carefully kept away from thought and view. The spirit which pervades the action of the Shield is therefore the spirit of joy: joy in movement, joy in repose; joy in peace, and joy in battle: anywhere and always joy, until the day that must come shall come, and the final plunge is made into the Darkness, where a Sceptre, ruling all the dead, is not worth as much as is the mess of a labourer for hire, though the master be poor, and can give but scanty cheer,\* if only it be had beneath the cheerful sun and in the abode of the living.

In writing thus I am not unmindful of the Greek Tragedy. But I do not think it qualifies the general truth of my position; and I would recommend those who doubt, to consult the remarkable observations of Bishop Butler, in the *Analogy*, on passive habits.

Upon the Translation I have only to say that I have aimed at great fidelity—in a word, at the representation of Homer

as he is; though well aware in how slight a measure this object can have been gained: for in the effort to hold firmly by the bone and sinew of the Poet, the ethereal parts escape.

I have given to the obscure word *cirai* the sense of ramparts, which the context seems almost to require: and I have not attempted to render by any exact equivalent the expression *periclyntos Amphiguetis*; even Chapman in this place recoils from the letter, and translates the phrase "the famous Artsman."

#### THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES, WROUGHT BY HEPHAISTOS.

Il. xviii. 468-608.

##### I.

So He spake, and left the goddess;  
Straightway to the bellows drew,  
Fixed them fireward, set them blowing;  
Mouths a score in all they blew,  
Reddening, whitening, all the furnace  
With their timely various blast,  
As the god and work required it,  
Slower now, and now more fast.  
Precious gold, and stubborn copper,  
Silver store, and tin, he cast  
In the flame. The ponderous anvil  
Next upon its block he tries;  
One hand grasps the sturdy hammer,  
One the pincers firmly plies.

##### II.

First of all, the Shield he moulded  
Broad, and strong, and wrought throughout,  
With a bright and starry border,  
Threefold thick, set round about.  
Downward hung its belt of silver,  
Five the layers of the Shield,  
And with skilful mind he sculptured  
Rare devices o'er its field.

##### III.

There he wrought Earth, Sea, and Heaven,  
There he set the unwearied Sun,  
And the waxing Moon, and stars that  
Crown the blue vault every one;  
Pleiads, Hyads, strong Orion,  
Arctos, hight to boot the Wain.  
He upon Orion waiting,  
Only he of all the train  
Shunning still the baths of Ocean,  
Wheels and wheels his round again.

##### IV.

There he carved two goodly Cities  
Thick with swarms of speaking men.

##### V.

Weddings were in one, and banquets,  
Torches blazing overhead,  
Nuptial hymns, and from their chambers  
Brides about the city led.

Here to pipe and harp resounding  
Young men wildly whirling danced ;  
While the women, each one standing  
By their porches, gaze entranced.

## VI.

But the townsmen all assembled  
In the forum thronging stood ;  
For a strife of twain had risen,  
Suing on a fine of blood.  
All was paid, the first protested,  
Pleading well to move the crowd ;  
Nought was had, upheld the second ;  
Each to obey an umpire vowed ;  
And the hearers, as they sided  
This or that way, cheered aloud.  
And the heralds ordered silence ;  
And, on chairs of polished stone,  
Ranged in venerable circle  
Sate the Elders. One by one  
Each the clear-toned herald's sceptre  
Took, and standing forth alone  
Spake his mind. Two golden talents  
Lay before them, to requite  
Only him, among the Judges,  
Straightliest who should judge the right.

## VII.

But before the second City  
Bright in arms two Armies lay.  
Evil choice one gave the other :  
Either half the goods to pay  
In that smiling town, or see it  
Given to fire and slaughter. They  
Brooked it not, but armed for ambush.  
Wives beloved, and stripling hands,  
And with these the age-bound greybeards,  
Guard the wall. Off march the bands.

## VIII.

Arès and Athènè lead them ;  
Gold, and golden-clad, they gleam,  
Fair, and large in aims, and towering  
Right and left, as gods beseeem.  
Dwindled either host beside them. —  
One to ambush held its way,  
Where the folk was used to water,  
And along the river lay  
Wrapt in swarthy armour. Yonder,  
Twain for scouts they set, to keep  
Watch for the expected booty,  
Curly-horned beeves, and sheep.  
Soon it comes in view. Two shepherds  
Mirthful music heedless play  
On their pipes. Forewarned, the army  
Quick make havoc of the prey,  
Snowy flocks, and droves of oxen,  
And the swains beside them slay.

## IX.

When the host before the ramparts  
Heard the bellowing din from far,  
Mounted each man on his chariot  
Drove the prancing steeds to war :  
Quick they came. They closed in battle  
Ranged along the river's banks,  
And they hurled the sharp-tipped \* lances  
Each athwart the other's ranks.

\* Literally, copper-tipped.

Strife and Tumult there were mingling,  
There destroying Fate he drew ;  
Some alive and still unwounded,  
Some she grasped, with gashes new ;  
Some, now corpses, through the turmoil  
Dragging by the feet she bore,  
And her shoulders had a mantle  
Dabbled foul with human gore.  
Like to living men they mingled,  
Fought alive with might and main,  
And, alive, to either army  
Dragged the bodies of the slain.

## X.

There he set a loamy fallow,  
Three times wrought, full soft, and wide :  
Many a team, and many a ploughman  
Down and up the fallow plied.  
And as each, the boundary reaching,  
Turned, would one that stood beside  
Give into his hands the wine-cup  
Honey-sweet. So each more fain,  
Wheeling down the deep soft furrow,  
Eager strove the bound to gain.  
And the darkening glebe behind them,  
All along, albeit of gold,  
New wrought earth in hue resembling,  
Gave a marvel to behold.

## XI.

There he set a field corn-laden.  
In that field the shearers reap,  
Grasping close their sharpened sickles.  
Down the furrows, heap on heap,  
Falls the grain to ground. The binders  
Sheaves, in order following, bind ;  
Binders three : to whom unwearied  
Carrier-lads their armfuls bring.  
Watching from beside the furrow,  
Silent near them stands the King,  
Staff in hand, and glad in spirit.  
By an oak o'ershadowing,  
Heralds, for the feast preparing,  
Slay a weighty ox, and dress ;  
And the women strew thick o'er it  
Barley-meal, the reaper's mess.

## XII.

There he set a goodly vineyard,  
Laden with its grapes of gold :  
Silver-pales the pendent clusters  
Glossy-black all through uphold.  
Moat of bronze \* around the border,  
Round the moat a hedge of tin ;  
One small path, at time of vintage,  
Lets the gatherers out and in.  
And the train of youths and maidens  
In the wicker-baskets brings,  
Blithe of thought, the luscious fruitage.  
Daintily a stripling sings  
To his clear-toned lyre, amongst them,  
So as Linos sung of yore :  
They too, frisking, shouting, singing,  
Stamp the time upon the floor.

\* It is an unsolved question whether the word in the original (*αργύρεον*) refers only to colour, or to a metallic substance. In my opinion, if it refers to a metallic substance, that substance is bronze.



## XIII.

There a herd of kine he moulded,  
 Some in tin, and some in gold,  
 Lowing they, with horns uplifted,  
 Rushed afield from out the fold,  
 Where the wavy reed-bed quivered,  
 Where the sounding river rolled.  
 Golden herdsmen four attend them,  
 Nine swift dogs behind. When lo!  
 Dread to see, a pair of lions,  
 Mid the kine that foremost go  
 Seized a bellowing bull, and dragged him  
 Roaring. Dogs and men pursued.  
 They, the huge hide tearing open,  
 Lapped the bowels and the blood.  
 While the herdsmen, void of purpose,  
 Chid the swift hounds to the proof,  
 These, as loath to grip the lions,  
 Bayed at hand, yet held aloof.

## XIV.

There a pasture, broad, and gleaming —  
 White with sheep, in beauteous glade,  
 And with hut, and roof-clad pen, and  
 Stall, the mighty Master made.

## XV.

There a Dance the mighty Master  
 In the brodered metal wrought.  
 Such to rich-haired Ariadne  
 Daidalos in Knossos brought,  
 Spacious Knossos. Youths and maidens,  
 Maidens grown of age to wed,  
 Hand on wrist, each one with other,  
 Through the mazes lightly sped.  
 These are robed in rarest muslin,  
 Those fine-woven tunics wear,  
 Soft with glaze of oil, and glistening.  
 These are crowned with garlands fair,  
 Those their golden poniards, hanging  
 From their belts of silver, bear.  
 Now with trained feet careering  
 All the troop in circle \* flies,  
 Like the potter's wheel † and gearing,  
 Which for speed he sits and tries;  
 Now each rank in backward movement  
 On the rank behind them fall.  
 Charmed with those bewitching dancers,  
 Throngs a gazing crowd. Mid all  
 Harps and sings the sacred minstrel:  
 Ever, as his notes begin,  
 Tumblers twain are wildly whirling  
 Round the open ring within.

## XVI.

Ocean's might, resistless River,  
 Last of all, his labour sealed,  
 Rolling round the outmost border  
 Of the deftly-fashioned Shield.  
 1867.

W. E. GLADSTONE.

\* The simile of the potter's wheel has led me to describe the dance in terms as circular; and I have been influenced in rendering this passage to a certain extent by dances as I have seen them practised by a Greek village population of this day.  
 † "My thoughts are whirled like a potter's wheel."  
 — Henry VI., 1, 5.

From The Contemporary Review.

## LETTERS FROM ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

TO THE AUTHOR OF "ORION" ON LITERARY AND GENERAL TOPICS.

## III.

To English philologists, in general, but more especially all those who can take an interest in the early studies of lyrical poets, it would be both curious and interesting to discover the methods adopted by different poets towards attaining excellence in the verbal mastery of their Art:—how they obtained their skill in diction—in fact, a command of words. But they are all silent. In the first chirrups and snatches of song, they all begin alike,—*i.e.*, without thinking as to how they do it—very much after the manner of song-birds. "They lisped in numbers, for the numbers came," and of course the words came first. And this bird-like practice may continue during some years, and with admirable success, being the fresh breath of the morning, the thought of any special studies only occurring with the advance towards some maturity of purpose. The two greatest song-writers the world has ever known—Burns and Béranger—probably continued in the first youthful way longer than most other poets; yet Burns eventually took to study, after some fashion, which is not, I believe, very well known, except that he fancied a little Latin would materially help him, and, finding it did not, he exclaims with amusing indignation;—

What's a' your jargon o' your schools—  
 Your Latin names for horns and stools,—  
 If honest Nature made ye fools,  
 What sairs yer grammars?  
 Ye'd better ta'en up spades and shoofs,  
 Or knappin'-hammers!

In another poem he says, with a sort of humorous self-irony, not without sarcasm at scholastic exactions, "Ye ken nae Greek." The biographers of Béranger are anxious to show that he had studied the finest classical poets; and yet, at the age of thirty-seven—judging by the date of his birth and that of the poem—he wrote:—

C'est alors que Philomèle  
 M'enseignant ses plus doux sons,  
 J'irais de la pastourelle  
 Accompagner les chansons.  
 Puis j'irais charmer l'ermite,  
 Qui, sans vendre l'eau bénite,  
 Donne aux pauvres son manteau.

Je volerais vite, vite, vite,  
Si j'étais petit oiseau!

That Béranger must have made special studies of various kinds, before he could have attained to that perfection of finished simplicity manifested in most of his songs and other poems, there can be no doubt; but what they were has never, I believe, been recorded. Wordsworth, in an elaborate Preface, unfolds his views of the high and sacred office of the Poet, and on more than one occasion boasts of the pains and labour he has bestowed upon the Art, as Milton had done, yet no hint of *how* they went to work is vouchsafed to us. Shelley wrote an Essay, entitled "A Defence of Poetry" (a most inadequate title), which I should like to get printed in letters of gold; but Shelley, like all the rest, down to Gerald Massey and Algernon Swinburne, is mute as to all the means he took for his marvellous command of words. Miss E. B. Barrett, while alluding to her arduous studies, leaves us in many respects quite in the dark as to the collection of materials, *modus operandi*, and speculative excursions. Nor could her Letters, which I am about to give (on English Rhymes and Versification), have been in all probability ever written but for a certain friendly provocation that will be narrated. The present paper, may, therefore, be regarded as a first glimpse of such secret work as we have alluded to — *notes pour servir à l'histoire*, &c., — or how young poets (neglecting their future nests) feather their wings and arrows.

Miss Barrett had sent me the MS. of her beautiful poem entitled "The Dead Pan," asking my opinion about it, where it would be best to send it, or if it should be reserved for a special volume. Of course I admired its poetry and its versification, but concerning her view of perfect and imperfect, or *allowable* rhymes, in that poem, and several of her other productions, I wished, once for all, to object, and give full reasons for it. Still, as I had only published certain tragedies, and never any volume of lyrical, or so-called minor poems (nor have I done so up to this time), it seemed proper towards one who had long been secretly at work in that way, that I should give some rough sketch of my own studies of that kind, the substance of which may be condensed within a few pages, as it was in the first instance, in one or two notes. I am not aware of this sort of revelation having ever been hitherto made by any one.

It is related somewhere of Sir Walter Scott — and if the story is not true, it does not in the least signify — that at a Christmas merry-making, the genial border-minstrel proposed, among other round-games and puzzles, a prize to be given to whoever made a couplet, of any sort, with a *rhyme* to the first line which should end with the word "*silver*." There were to be no half-rhymes, or allowable rhymes, but a perfect rhyme. After young folks and old had thought, and frowned with comical mental struggles during some minutes, to no purpose, Sir Walter "put them out of their misery" by informing them, with a humorous smile, that there was *no rhyme* to "*silver*" in the English language! Hearing this "remarkable fact" when a boy — though I subsequently came to find it ridiculous enough — it made a considerable impression upon me, as a very strange thing in any copious language; but having commenced my first efforts in poetry by a sort of uncouth imitation of Milton's blank verse, and then abruptly ceasing (finding, no doubt, that I had got out of my depth) during six or eight years, the whole matter passed out of my thoughts. But not out of mind, because nothing seems ever to pass out of some minds — perhaps not quite out of any mind — and when it again occurred, I was commencing to write short lyrical poems, in the usual way — *i.e.*, upon poetical emotions without very well-defined subjects, or subjects worth defining. I naturally "fought shy" of ending a line with "*silver*," but having to forage my brain for rhymes to other words of two syllables, such as *shadow* — *planet* — *silbert* — *squirrel* — *beetle* — *statue* — *trellis* — *anchor* — *April* — *August* — *temple* — *virtue* — *forest* — *angel* — *poet* — *proper* — *budget* — *stranger* — *open* — *almond* — *bayonet* — *blossom* — *something* — *nothing*, &c., — I found there was not a single perfect rhyme to any one of them! The above list is by no means exhaustive. It is to be understood that this is only a rough sketch of an Essay, and of one not likely ever to be written by me. This discovery, however, naturally led to further search, and I then made a list of the words of one syllable, and also of three syllables, to which there were no perfect rhymes in our language; also, a list of all those words to which there was only one rhyme, such as *people* and *steeple* — *anguish* and *languish* — *winter* and *printer* — *hornet* and *cornet* — *hatchet* and *latchet* — *mountain* and *fountain* — *darkness* and

*starkness* — *votive* and *motive* — *blackness* and *slackness*, &c., — and a list of the triplicates, or words that have only two rhymes to them, such as *billow*, *pillow*, *willow* — *iron*, *scion*, *lion*, — and those which are quadruple, these two latter lists being meagre enough. Seeing the conditions of lyrical composition in English to be subject to these limits, it became obvious that for any freedom in writing, a large admission must be made for what the practice of the greatest of our poets has established as imperfect but allowable rhymes. And we now come to the vexatious fact that, while the true and only real test of a rhyme is its sound to the ear, many persons, deficient in that organ, take refuge in the plausible pretext that words must be rhymes to the eye — i.e., the letters must be in accord. How short-sighted and inconsiderate this is, can be shown in a moment. A learned member of the Spanish Academy once undertook to show us that we had twenty different sounds to the very first letter of our alphabet. Evading that elaborate examination, we will content ourselves with directing attention to the fact of the positive exchange of sounds which some of our vowels undergo in different words. Thus, *have* and *cave*, where the first sound is *h'av'* and the second is *ayve*; *watch* and *match*, the first sound being *wo'tch*, and the second *atch*; — the same with *wand* and *hand* — *was* and *has*; — *wonder* and *thunder*, the first word having the *o* sounded as *u*; — *head* and *mead*, the first sounding *ed* and the second *eed*; — *caught* and *draught*, the first having the terminal sound of *ort*, and the second *ast*; — *do* and *go*, the first sounding *oo*, and the second *o*; — *plough* and *tough*, the first sounding *ow*, and the second *uff*; — *wounds* and *sounds*, the first having the vowel sound of *oo*, and the second of *ow'n*, &c. The non-recognition of these numerous changes of sound in the same vowels in different words (causing so many words which are perfect rhymes to the eye to be in reality far more imperfect to the ear than many words which are of quite a different spelling) has been the cause of frequent critical censures when the defect was rather in the critic than the poet, and sometimes entirely in the critic. Thus the very same critic who has unhesitatingly accepted the words *scarce* and *farce*, *hood* and *flood*, or *charm* and *warm*, as perfect rhymes, when they are most palpably of different vowel-sounds, would actually object to *dawn* and *morn*, because

*morn* was not spelt *mawn*; and, indeed, I have heard men of similar bad or cavilling ear endeavour to prove such objection by adopting a provincial accent, or screwing their mouths in order to make "dawn" and "dawning" partially take the sound of *dar'n* and *darn'ing*, so that they should not rhyme with "morn" and "morning"; — and, in like manner, to give "morn" a provincial twang of "mour'rn," in order to prove that it did not rhyme with *dar'n* or *daw'n*. The Scotch have their peculiarities, so have the Irish, so have Yorkshire and Somersetshire — Londoners no less — and they should all "mind what they are about."

While some readers will be much interested in this question of English pronunciation, others will regard it, I fear, as supererogatory, so that at this stage of our introductory comments the wish arises that it were possible to ask if we were fatiguing our audience; but as this cannot be done, it will now be the safest plan to bring this matter "home" as briefly as possible.

From what has been already shown and suggested, it will follow that for due freedom of lyrical poetry due allowance should be made for the perverse and exceptional peculiarities of the genius of the English language. Rhymes to the ear are to be regarded as the true criterion, and never to be sacrificed to rhymes however perfect to the eye. Finding there are so many words of one, two, and three syllables (i.e., the vast majority of our words) which have no rhymes at all to them, a reasonable number of allowable rhymes should be recognized, — that is to say, rhymes of consonants, where the actual vowels differ, or have different sounds, and other words which do not assume to be rhymes, but which rank with the Spanish *rima asonante* and have a pleasing effect when judiciously and sparsely mingled with perfect rhymes. I even consider that lyrical verse of the heroic measure would have a richer effect if some imperfect rhymes were purposely introduced, and this on the principle of *harmonious* discords in music which render the effect so much more grand, — in fact, while the genius of music depends upon original melody, the science is based upon harmony, which disallows all monotonies unless for isolated special effects.

Having gone to such "lengths" in my liberalities and allowances for our lyrical poetry, I am still ready to admit that

some line of demarcation should be drawn. And this line, I think, has been passed more boldly, defiantly, and persistently by Miss E. B. Barrett than by any other English poet. Strange to say, while various unfortunate men have received the severest censure for trifling and trumpery licences (often quite fair and really allowable), my admired correspondent has but seldom been called to account for her numerous violations of all received principles of English rhyme. But what a compliment to her genius, the brightness and fertility of her intellect, and to the energy and euphony of her verse, that critics were carried away by the stream, and rarely had time to take heed of the sticks and straws they were passing! This fact also implies a compliment to the critics.

The poem of "The Dead Pan," opens with this verse,—

Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas,  
Can ye listen in your silence?  
Can your mystic voices tell us  
Where ye hide? In floating islands  
With a wind that evermore  
Keeps you out of sight of shore?

Pan, Pan is dead.

I am requested to make my comments on the MS. of this then unpublished poem;—and I fear it will be thought that I did not do my "spiriting" as gently as the poetess expected.

June 17, 1842.

Certainly:—mark as much as you please. They will all be marks of kindness, coming from you, whether depreciative or otherwise.

What if certain passages in "Dead Pan" should be in suspense, critically; voices crying to me, "Alter this"—"Alter that!"—whereas I may not have made up my mind, and my rhymes, as to alterations anywhere? For the rest, there will be some fifteen or sixteen pages of print. But it is in stanzas. You shall have it in MS., and, also in proof, and then I shall be sure to do my best—or worst for you.

I commenced with a due appreciation of the poetry—its subject, treatment, and the euphous flow of the versification; but took objection to many of the rhymes. I did not like "tell us" as a rhyme for Hellas; and still less, *islands* as a rhyme for *silence*. The only excuse for them, was the difficulty with regard to the first, and the impossibility of the second, as there was no perfect rhyme for *either* of them in the English language. I suggested that perhaps they were not intended as absolute rhymes at all, but euphous quantities of the *rima aso-*

*nante* class?—or was it considered that the rhymes being on the first syllables (*Hell* and *tell*, *si* and *I*) instead of the last, they were to be regarded as fair exchanges? In verse IV., I accepted "rolls on" and "the sun" and "altars" and "welters" on the principle of *allowable* rhymes, as they were quite as good as "corses" and "forces" where the letters were all right, and recognized as true rhymes—which they really are *not*. In verse VI., I objected to "flowing" and "slow in," (the rhyme being only on the first syllable), and in verse XII. to "golden" and "enfolding," for the same reason. In verse XIII. "iron" was very badly rhymed by "inspiring," being only a rhyme on *ir*. "Panther" and "saunter" in the next verse were bad. In verse XVI., "driven" and "heaving" were not admissible. In verse XIX. "turret" and "chariot" could only be excusable on the equivocal grounds that there was *no* rhyme to *either* of them in the language, and it might seem generous to wed them for that reason, if not quite justifiable. The words "o'er her" and "horror,"—"angels" and "candles,"—"nothing" and "truth in," could only be excused on the same grounds, as there were *no* rhymes in the language to "nothing," "angels," or "horror." There were several more of these anomalies in the same poem, but I felt I had said quite enough. I was very curious to know how all this would be received. The following will show to what purpose I had preached and prayed:—

(No date, but apparently written in London.)

Oh—you are a gnasher of teeth in criticism, I see!—you are a lion and a tiger in one, and in a most carnivorous mood, over and above. My dear Mr. Horne,—do you know, I could not help, in the midst of my horror and Pan-ic terror, smiling outright at the naïveté of your doubt as to whether my rhymes were really meant for rhymes at all? That is the naïveté of a right savage nature—of an Indian playing with a tomahawk, and speculating as to whether the white faces had any feeling in their skulls, "*quand même!*" Know then, that my rhymes are really meant for rhymes—and that I take them to be actual rhymes—as good rhymes as any used by rhymers—and that in no spirit of carelessness or easy writing, or desire to escape difficulties, have I run into them,—but chosen them, selected them, on principle, and with the determinate purpose of doing my best, in and out of this poem, to have them received! What you say of a "poet's duty," no one in the world can feel more deeply in the verity of it, than myself. If I fail ultimately before the public—that is, before the people—for an ephemeral popu-



larity does not appear to me worth trying for — it will not be because I have shrunk from any amount of labour — where labour could do anything. I have *worked* at poetry — it has not been with me reverie, but Art. As the physician and lawyer work at their several professions, so have I, and so do I, apply to mine. And this I say, only to put by any charge of carelessness which may rise up to the verge of your lips or thoughts.

With reference to the double rhyming, it has appeared to me employed with far less variety in our *serious* poetry than our language would admit of genially, — and that the various employment of it would add another string to the lyre of our Terpander.\* It has appeared to me that the single rhymes as usually employed, are scarcely as various as they might be — [Perfectly true, and also what follows.] — but that of the double rhymes, the observation is still truer. A great deal of attention — far more than it would take to rhyme with conventional accuracy — have I given to the subject of rhymes, and have determined in cold blood, to hazard some experiments. At the same time, I should tell you, that scarcely one of the Pan rhymes might not separately be justified by the *analogy of received rhymes*, although they have not themselves been received. Perhaps (also) there is not so irregular a rhyme throughout the poem of Pan as the “fellow” and “prunella” of Pope the infallible. [Bad as this may be — and every poet of any vigour, has abundance of bad as well as half rhymes — there is a marked difference between that sort of badness and what was pointed out in the “Dead Pan.”] I maintain that my “islands” and “silence” is a regular rhyme in comparison. Tennyson’s “tendons” and “attendance” is more objectionable to my mind than either. You, who are a reader of Spanish poetry, must be aware how soon the ear may be satisfied, even by a recurring vowel. I mean to try it. At any rate, there are so few regular double rhymes in the English language, that we must either admit some such trial, or eschew the double rhymes generally; and I, for one, am very fond of them, and believe them to have a power not yet drawn out to its length and capable development, in our lyrical poetry especially.

And now — upon all this — to prove to you that I do not set out on this question with a minority of one — I take the courage and vanity to send you a note which a poet whom we both admire, wrote to a friend of mine who lent him the MS. of this very “Pan.” Mark! — no opinion was asked about the rhymes, — the satisfaction was altogether impulsive — from within. Send me the note back, and never tell anybody that I showed it to you — it would appear too vain. Also, I have no right to show it. It was sent to me as likely to please me, — and pleased me so much, and naturally

on various accounts, and not least from the beauty of the figure used to illustrate my *rhymatology*, that I begged to be allowed to keep it. So, send it back, after reading it confidentially, and pardon me as much as you can of the self-will fostered by it.

Perhaps, under all present circumstances, I might now have considered myself exonerated as to the secret of this praise, in the spirit of which I should have most heartily joined (while objecting to some of the *letters*), but of course I took no copy of the note, and returned it as requested. I even forgot who the poet was that wrote it, but fancy it must have been Landor. An allusion is next made to some critic in the *Quarterly Review*, always so fond of “doing a mischief” where poets and poetry are concerned, who carped and cavilled at several paltry and insignificant matters, such as the use of the word “very,” and sounding the *ed* at the close of certain words.

Why shouldn’t I (also) say “very pale,” if I please, for all Mr. Lockhart? It is very ludicrous, if I may not! I say no more “verys” than other people — and defy all the critics in the world to prove it. Let them count, and see. As to Tennyson, his admirer I am, and his imitator I am *not*, as certainly. Nearly everything in the “*Seraphim*” was written before I ever read *one* of his then published volumes: and even the “*instructing the reader to say ed*,” was done on the pattern of Campbell’s “*Theodoric*,” and not from a later example. In these last volumes of mine I have eschewed all signs whatever of a diæresis pronounced or unpronounced, — so as to give no offence either to myself or other people. But it would be sheer weakness to throw out a word from your vocabulary because somebody is pleased to hang his own foolscap on it. Let it hang there! It is not mine, — and I need not fear the disgrace of it.

About the “*Pans*” [the too frequent repetitions] you are right, and I shall thin them as much as I can. For all your kindness about the poem I am also grateful — “very” grateful, if you will let me be so insolent to Mr. Lockhart.

You are a bloody critic, nevertheless. I am glad to hear of B —, and agree with you on the point of Patmore.

Ever and truly yours,  
E. B. B.

The bravely humorous use of the epithet that has made the reader start with incredulous and comical dismay (having a back reference to the lady’s graphic allusion to lions and tigers) in defiance of all its ordinary objectionableness, and outrage on “ears polite,” I could not make up my mind to omit, but “after a struggle” have left it to the generous and

\* The masterly use of double, treble, and all sorts of rhymes in *comic verse* — such as in “*Hudibras*,” “*Don Juan*,” “*Tom Hood’s Poems*,” and others, is some proof of this argument.

right appreciation of those readers who are not unlikely to be excessively amused, even if not quite approving of it. The letter concludes with some genial criticism on the poetry of the Hon. Mrs. Norton, Rogers, Patmore, and some others, which must be reserved for a future opportunity.

Greatly admiring and respecting the breadth of intention and principle, as well as the moral courage of Miss Barrett, it will readily be supposed that I did not think it right to persevere with any further comments on this question. Besides, it is best, even with far inferior persons, to avoid a sore subject. The next time, however, that I went down on my usual visit to Miss Mitford, at Three Mile Cross, during "the strawberry season," as she called it, I determined to have the matter fully out with her in her garden summer-house in face of all the geraniums. As she was a lady of the "old school," I was prepared for resistance when I unfolded my views as to the large number of allowable rhymes it seemed important, and indeed necessary, to admit in English lyrical verse. She broke in upon me at the outset, with — "Oh, pray do not teach or promulgate anything to make the Art of Poetry easier and more open to all-comers. Do everything you can to throw all sorts of difficulties in the way. The world is overstocked already with minor and minikin poets, and the crop multiplies every year. One of the very best things I have ever done in my life is to have nipped in the bud half-a-dozen young poetesses. Elegant girls have come to me, declaring they had been visited by poetical impulses, and begging me to read what they had written. A very little was enough, and I assured them that such things had all been done over and over again." Admitting the good service thus rendered, not only to the young ladies themselves, but to their future husbands and children, I still requested to be heard, and told her of the recent correspondence with Miss Barrett. Then she listened very attentively. Repeating the broad views I entertained as to allowable rhymes, both single and double, I also spoke of the freedom as well as the harmonious variety to be attained by adopting, occasionally, the Spanish *asonante* verse, of which our language was highly capable, though it had so very seldom been used. Thus the *Magico Prodigioso* of Calderon opens with this sort of verse : —

En la amena soledad  
De aquesta apacible estancia  
Bellísimo laberinto  
De árboles, flores y plantas,  
Podeis dejarme, dejando  
Conmigo, que ellos me bastan  
Por compañía, los libros  
Que os mandé sacar de casa.

Idos los dos à Antioquia,  
Gozad de sus fiestas varias,  
Y volved por me à este sitio,  
Quando et sol cayendo vaya  
A sepultarse en las ondas,  
Que entre obscuras nubes pardas  
Al gran cadáver de oro  
Son monumentos de plata.  
Aqui me hallareis.

The foregoing lines have been so admirably translated by Mr. Denis Florence MacCarthy, that although they were only recently published, I feel sure the anachronism of transcribing them here will be readily forgiven : —

In the pleasant solitude  
Of this tranquil spot, this thicket  
Formed of interlacing boughs,  
Buds, and flowers, and shrubs commingled,  
You may leave me, leaving also  
As my best companions, with me,  
(For I need none else) those books  
Which I bade you to bring hither.

Go to Antioch and mingle  
In its various sports, returning  
When the sun descending sinketh  
To be buried in the waves,  
Which beneath the dark clouds' fringes  
Round the royal corse of gold,  
Shine like sepulchres of silver.  
Here you'll find me.\*

Could these English lines have been read to Miss Mitford, it is probable that she would have admitted their euphonious flow, and that one might soon come not to feel the loss of the rhymes. But in the absence of such an example, Miss Mitford simply agreed that it was "all very well for the Spanish, but thought it would not do in English verse." I then told her of the battle over the "Dead Pan" manuscript, adding my objections to certain rhymes in another of our friend's poems — such as "children," and "bewildering," and "stilled in;" — "resounding" and "found him," — "Heaven" and "unbelieving;" — the

\* Southey and Shelley were very harmonious in the use of the short lines of an irregular blank verse; but their rhythmic quantities were as usual, and not like the above. Mr. Robert Buchanan, in his "*Book of Orms*," has adopted this *asonante* verse very successfully.

fact being, whether the poetess intended it or not, that she was for introducing a system of placing rhymes on the first half of the word, and leaving the closing syllable to a question of euphonious quantity. Now, I frankly admitted that she had effected this so well that it did not hurt my ear, and I had mainly protested against it as contrary to all received usage, and to save her from critical onslaught, especially of those who could not appreciate her genius and her excellence in other respects. In like manner, "Bion" and "undying,"—"Bacchantes" and "grant us,"—"deep in" and "leaping," were all rhymes on the first or second syllable. I had, moreover, discovered that it had so happened, when there was *no* rhyme to a word, the lady was inspired, probably without being clearly aware of the fact, to unite another word in the same condition of single life; thus, among other instances, —

But natural Beauty shuts her bosom  
To what the natural feelings tell !  
Albeit I sigh'd, the trees would blossom —  
Albeit I smiled, the blossoms fell.

Who can say such a euphonious verse hurts the ear? — and who can fail to admire it as poetry? One felt ashamed of having foraged out the fact that there was no rhyme in the English language either to "bosom" or to "blossom." There seemed, indeed, an *et tu Brute* look through the air on the whole of these objections — particularly as many of the foregoing examples are taken, not from the "Dead Pan," but from a poem in a foot-note of which she makes such handsome allusion to myself. If I felt this at that period, I feel it the more now she is gone. And, after all, she may be right, to a considerable extent, in her struggle to enlarge the boundaries of lyrical poetry.

Miss Mitford smiled like a summer morning, but shook her head. Early training and fixed associations made her unable to look at the question in any new light. But it was the same with Leigh Hunt, and others. The delightful authoress of "Our Village," at the time we are writing about, was a bright silvery sixty, and her face always shone as brightly as her hair. I never saw a blooming girl of sixteen with a more fruity hopefulness in her countenance. Yet she clung to the past, not because she would not go on with the stream of things, but because from early training and habits of mind she *could* not. These

new theories of rhymes outraged her notions of propriety, and, much as she loved and admired the poetess, she refused to entertain them, and more than hinted reproof to me for my large allowances in such matters. The special examples I had given she met with the following anecdote of another person, which, had it been narrated with any humorous or graphic art of the ordinary sort, would have had a rather ludicrous effect. As it is, I have some "compunctious visitings" in giving it. But Miss Mitford's humour was of a peculiar kind. She never adorned or "embellished," or used any mimetic art — if she really possessed any — but just placed the facts in a simple and prominent position, and slowly and drily delivered them with all the gravity of a chronicle. Strongly objecting to the rhyming licences adopted by the poetess, she thus proceeded to account for, and in part excuse them. "Our dear friend, you are aware, never sees anybody but the members of her own family, and one or two others. She has a high opinion of the skill in *reading*, as well as the fine taste of Mr. —, and she gets him to read her new poems aloud to her, and so tries them upon him (as well as herself), something after the manner of Voltaire with regard to a far less elegant authority. So Mr. — stands upon the hearth-rug, and uplifts the MS., and his voice, while our dear friend lies folded up in Indian shawls upon her sofa, with her long black tresses streaming over her bent-down head, all attention. Now, dear Mr. — has lost a front tooth — not quite a front one, but a side-front one — and this, you see, causes a defective utterance. It does not induce a lisp, or a hissing kind of whistle, as with low people similarly circumstanced, but an amiable indistinctness, a vague softening of syllables into each other, — so that *sil-lance* and *il-lance*, would really sound very like one another, — and so would *childrin* and *bewildrin* — *bacchantes* and *grant-es*, don't you see?"

On the other hand, while really perfect rhymes to "*daisy*" — "*tongue*" — and "*busy*" are found in "*crazy*" — "*young*" and "*dizzy*," — there are no English rhymes, to the *eye*, for any of the first three. It will be obvious that all the foregoing examples are outside and far beyond the little commonplace objections to words, which a better knowledge of the condition of the language, and an examination of the practice of all standard poets (who are full of licences) would put

clean out of court. Yet so strong is the force of habit, that Leigh Hunt—a poet of a life-long experience—upon coming to a couplet where the words *arch* and *porch* were given as allowable rhymes—as they are and *must* be, with all of similar family,—wrote in the margin that they were “most impossible,” and proposed to substitute the following,—

A Serjeant of the Law, wary and wise,  
Whose robes had often brushed Paul's Paradise, &c.

Passing over the glaring paraphrase, as there is not one word of the second line in Chaucer (neither do I consider the meaning at all the right one, and I may frankly admit not feeling quite sure that my own version is accurate), the ear that would not admit *arch* and *porch*, can yet give *paradise* and *wise*, not perceiving that the *s* in the latter word is pronounced as *z*—not *wice*, but *wise*—and takes rank with the allowable rhymes, like all of that, as well as the “arch” and “porch,” class. The late Lord Lytton also, not very long ago, made an objection of a similar kind to a passage in something I had sent him; and then courteously added some words of the usual kind about spots in the sun, and that he supposed his “training had led him to regard certain rules as necessary,” &c. It seems clear that those who emancipate themselves from the old system, in special respects, and examine our language for justification, will gradually become latitudinarians. Thus, while objecting to some of Miss Barrett's rhymes as inadmissible, I yet consider there is some truth and foundation in her defence of her theory. Many of her half-rhymes—either as consonant rhymes with different vowels (like *march*, *lurch*, *torch*, &c., which are all allowable) or having the rhymes on the first syllable, and leaving only a euphonious ending, do not really hurt the ear, the positive proof of which is, that the great majority of her readers and admirers have probably never noticed them. And be it *ever borne in mind*, that here, and elsewhere, in all critical strictures, whenever there is a doubt or difficulty with regard to the propriety of a rhyme, and its effect upon the ear, it is a most unjust and erroneous proceeding in estimating the *poetry*, to detach the rhymes from the context. I only do so on this occasion from necessity, since the discussion is not of poetry, but of first principles as matter of language and pronunciation. As a marked

instance of effects on the ear, the delight which children take in the old Nursery Songs is on account of their rhythmic harmonies; yet, in the very great majority of them, the music is of the kind of the old-fashioned child-song of—

Goosey, goosey, Gander !  
Where shall I wander ?  
Upstairs ?  
Downstairs ?—  
In my Lady's chamber ?

In chanting the foregoing, nobody, child, mother, or teacher—has ever been troubled with the *dawning* and *mawning* nonsense, and instructed the child to say *Gander* and *wann-der*, but has accepted the sound of *o* for a good rhyme to the *a* (in *gander*, as it is, and *must* be), and also the euphonious *asonante* of “chamber” as a third sort of rhyme. (In the verb to *wonder*, the *o* becomes *u* in pronunciation.) This early illustration of our ear's education is given to show that such things do not really hurt the ear then, or afterwards, and it is only when they are closely examined (as we have now been obliged to do) that the objection arises. In like manner, we may refer to the favourite old sea-song, by Dibdin, of “Here, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowlin !” It is quite too late for anybody to pretend that he has ever been troubled by the “bowlin” and “howling,” or “the crew” and “him to !” No doubt all this looks very like coming over to the lady's side,—and so let it look, for to that side who knows but future poets may possibly be drawn, with more or less variation of experiment and practice ?

The only systematic rhyming authority in the language is *Walker's Rhyming Dictionary*, and very laboriously, and very well, it is done. As examples of the licences of standard poets he gives the following,—

Draw next the patron of that *tree* ;  
Draw Bacchus and soft Cupid *by*. — OLDHAM.  
Our thoughtless sex is caught by outward  
*form*  
And empty noise, and loves itself in *man*. —  
DRYDEN.

My parents are propitious to my *wish*,  
And she herself consenting to the *Miss*. —  
DRYDEN.

One sees her thighs transformed ; another  
*vicious*  
Her arms shoot out, and branching into  
*boughs*. — ADDISON.

This last I thoroughly justify, and do not object to the next :—



Wit, kindled by the sulph'rous breath of *vice*,  
Like the blue lightning, while it shines *de-*  
*stroy*s. — POPE.

While considering the last example rather bold, it is nevertheless admissible. In short, the list of *allowable* rhymes given by Walker is of an extent to surprise all those who have not gone much into this question; and there is no doubt but the liberality becomes extended with one's experience. Yet, as before said, some kind of line should be drawn, however oscillating; — and however wide my notion of licence may have been thought, I am unable to go quite to the same lengths as the lexicographer. He quotes the following bit of Scriptural doggerel, referring to one of the Plagues of Egypt, frankly intimating that it does not offend his ear, —

And how did he commit their fruits  
Unto the *caterpillar*, —  
And eke the labour of their hands  
He gave to the *grasshopper*.

Anybody who can stand that, can stand anything. Walker's words are, — "I have purposely omitted many licences I might have produced, as judging them in reality too licentious. Among these, however, I do *not* reckon this of Sternhold and Hopkins, of Gothic memory." He then gives the verse just quoted. Our old Nursery Rhymes, with all their (unobserved) licences, never go to such a length. It is simply ludicrous, and the more so from its biblical gravity.

We now come to the very intricate, many-sided, opalescent question of *Versification* — metres, quantities, rhythm — and we shall be obliged to go back to Chaucer, the first great master in our heroic couplets. As all that has been done, in that way, since his time (A.D. 1400) by the Elizabethan poets and dramatists, — then by Milton, the first great master of our blank verse, — then by Pope, and his very different school, — then by Coleridge, Shelley, and Leigh Hunt (Cowper, Wordsworth, Moore, and others keeping in the regular metrical, and almost metallic, grooves), down to the present day of Tennyson, and his peers, — the mere opening of the subject could not possibly be rendered lucid and acceptable without extending this paper to a greater length than I think it would be right to intrude upon the courtesy of the Editor and Readers of the *Contemporary Review*. I therefore reserve a remarkable Letter from Miss Barrett, and another from Leigh Hunt, together with such connect-

ing observations as may seem necessary, for the next instalment of the present series.  
R. H. HORNE.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

#### CHINAMEN OUT OF CHINA.

OF late years we have heard so much of "Chinese cheap labour" from various parts of the world that it is somewhat difficult to realize the fact that not more than 200,000 Chinamen are working in foreign countries at the present time. Even this number is quite an outside estimate. America and Australia have so far been the favourite resorts for Chinese emigrants. Allowing 130,000 for the former country and 30,000 for the latter, 40,000 are left for Peru, the Sandwich Islands, and other places; evidently a more than sufficient margin. Yet the anxiety and alarm shown have been altogether out of proportion to these figures. We cannot help thinking that this is one of those cases — more common perhaps than is readily admitted — in which imagination plays a considerable part. Irishmen have emigrated and are still emigrating in far larger numbers than the Chinese, and they are more troublesome to deal with in the countries in which they settle. Nevertheless the Irishman is looked upon as a necessary evil in new lands, and tolerated accordingly. The Chinaman, however, is always regarded as an intruder. They are the only Asiatic race which, if they were secure from ill-treatment, would without special urging leave their native country freely. And even the most ignorant of those among whom they come have a hazy notion that there are 400,000,000 or more similar strange-looking people tightly packed at home and ready enough to seek their fortune elsewhere. The storehouse of labour seems practically inexhaustible. A dread of what might happen if capitalists could command and control these vast hordes of workmen as against men of their own race has made the labouring class, at any rate, blind to their good qualities. The Americans, for instance, were fain to admit that the Chinese came out grandly in the construction of the Pacific Railway. But that has nowise abated the sullen hostility with which they are regarded in California, and it needs but little to stir up this enmity to take a much more active shape than that of mere petitions

to Congress. We, too, insist upon forcing ourselves and our commerce upon the Chinese, but the most peaceful invasion on their side would, we take it, be resented by our trade unionists in very practical fashion. It is well enough that we should balance our Indian budget by debauching them with opium, and if need be we must support our position in that respect by war as before. They had better not emigrate to England none the less.

We have been led to make these remarks by the news of a little misunderstanding which has arisen recently in Victoria. The miners at the Lothair Mine struck for an increase of their already high wages. Other miners in the neighbourhood who at first were ready to take the wages then paid were persuaded to stand aloof. As a last resort, the owners engaged a body of Chinamen who were brought into the place accompanied by police. The colonial miners were in no mood to put up with this. They attacked police and Chinamen together, and worsted them, inflicting serious injuries on many. Eventually the Chinamen were obliged to give way, the original miners remained masters of the field, and the mine stands idle. The Victorian Government, afraid to lose the mining vote in the colony, behaved in a most cowardly manner and took no active proceedings against the rioters. Clearly, therefore, the line of democratic freedom in Victoria is drawn at industrious Asiatics, and if they seek work on equal terms with European colonists they do so at the risk of their lives. This, taken in conjunction with the harshness shown towards them in California and the massacre reported from South America, ought to keep the Chinese at home for the present.

And yet it seems a pity that this emigration, small as it is, should be checked. A Chinaman is qualified to do much that cannot be so well or so cheaply done by the white man. He can work, and work well, in a great variety of climates. A German, so the saying runs, will dine off a bone which an Englishman has picked. A Chinaman will fare sumptuously after both the Europeans have done their worst. It may perhaps be an exaggeration to couple the Chinese with the French as the best cooks in the world. But those who have most experience of their powers rate them highly, and in the capacity for making much out of little they are in no way inferior to the great leaders

of European gastronomy. In many a bush township a Chinaman is the only human being who has the sense to devote his spare time to the cultivation and irrigation of vegetables. Who would not have charitable feelings towards the man who in a dry and thirsty land can for a consideration furnish you with the crispest of lettuces on a hot summer's day? Give a Chinaman a bit of land, and if anything can be done with it at all he will turn it into a market-garden. His capacity for getting to places where his labour may be wanted, when once he has begun to roam, is remarkable. In 1869, when Fiji was not so well known as it is now, a labour vessel chanced to call at one of the remotest plantations. A Chinaman at once stepped ashore, and, walking to the planter's house, inquired if any hands would be needed next season, as by that time he and 300 more then at work in Tahiti (!) would be ready to take a fresh engagement. He had come to Fiji, so both he and the skipper averred, for that particular purpose. Most of them have a "dead horse" to work off on first landing in the shape of their passage-money and advances paid by some great Chinese house. They are, therefore, let out into a sort of mitigated slavery until they have cleared this. Nothing but the most unremitting industry enables them to become fairly their own masters. And when once they have got a little money they quickly go out of the mere labouring class. In this respect they resemble the Jews and genuine Americans. All of them being educated to a fair point, there is nothing to keep them back. And it is noteworthy that, passionately addicted as they are to opium — and one of the best freights for the up-country coaches is the opium case — they rarely take to it abroad to excess until they have made their "pile." Some of the richest and most influential importers in Melbourne, San Francisco, and Honolulu came out as common labourers, with their great round hats and coarse clothing. On the gold fields, of course, they are familiar figures, and many claims which have been abandoned as too poor have afforded them the means of returning to China with a comparative fortune. In short, for steady, dogged, persistent labour, under proper direction Chinamen are almost unequalled. To counterbalance their frugality, their industry, and, as a rule, their quiet peaceful behaviour, they certainly have drawbacks that, apart from the cheapness of their labour, account for the enmity felt towards them by

the rest of the population. In the first place, they have until recently brought with them no women. This has often given rise to serious troubles. A white woman who has once taken up with a Chinaman rarely leaves him. A famous and dramatic trial which took place some years ago at Melbourne threw some light upon this. Next they have a knack of carrying out their own peculiar system of law and equity quite regardless of the customs of the country in which they may be temporarily resident. Some singular instances of the secret and relentless way in which they enforce their rules among themselves have been discovered in California. In Victoria it is believed that in one case at least an innocent Chinaman has been hanged for murder by arrangement, his own confession confirming the evidence of his fellows and exonerating the guilty party. One Chinaman is so uncommonly like another to the eye of an unpracticed European that it is almost impossible to get valuable outside evidence on such a matter. Then, again, their districts in the cities are generally most abominably dirty and overcrowded. The Chinese quarter of San Francisco is one of the shows of the place. Little Bourke-street, which runs parallel to the principal business-street in Melbourne, is, too, beyond all question a most filthy hole. Still we could point to courts and alleys within a stone's throw of the Houses of Parliament, to say nothing of the waterside dens near the docks, which are worse even than these in way of dirt and unwholesomeness. Remissness on the part of the municipal authorities and greed on the part of the landlords are the causes in each case. Lastly, in the matter of gambling Chinamen are quite unmanageable. Gamble they will, though raid after raid be made upon their gaming-tables. And the extent to which they carry the practice is barely conceivable. Chinamen have been known to gamble themselves away when they had nothing else to play for. Their passion for gambling and their indifference to life were both curiously shown on Mr. Stuart's plantation at Tahiti—a plantation, by the way, which by means of the *Moaroa* and other vessels was responsible for much of what is called the South Sea Slave Trade—where at one time more than 400 Chinaman were employed. A complete epidemic of suicide broke out among them. They were not ill-used, nor were they ill-paid, nor was the labour painful and distressing, like that on the

ill-famed Guano Islands. Still the mania for self-destruction spread. This was a serious matter for the owners of the plantation, inasmuch as each Chinaman who thus put himself out of the world had, counting his passage, outfit, &c., cost a good round sum, and was bound over to work for a certain number of years at a fixed rate of wages. It was found upon examination that the suicides took place because the Chinamen, who had gambled away all their money in hand and to come as well as their persons, thought existence a burden. All sorts of devices were tried to stop the gambling, but to no purpose. At last the manager hit upon the bright idea of making the survivors of each gang of twenty men pay the full value of the one who made away with himself. After this there were no more suicides. It may be observed that one of the difficulties in dealing with Chinamen both in Tahiti and in the Sandwich Islands, where they are much employed, arises from the fact that some of those who emigrate are skilled workmen, and are consequently much disinclined to devote their time to field labour unless they are offered special inducements. This the planter too often does not understand, and attributes their hesitation to laziness or determination to break their contract.

There are such vast tracts distributed over the earth's surface which the Chinese could and would cultivate to advantage, but which are now quite useless, that it is impossible not to hope that ere long arrangements will be made to afford the security to their emigrants which is now lacking. If their numbers were increased a hundredfold, they would not suffice for the development of the idle wealth of South America, Jamaica, and the Southern States. And so far as can be seen, they are the only people who could be induced to undertake the work on a large scale. At present, however, all the steps which are being taken tend to their discouragement.

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From All The Year Round.  
CHILDHOOD IN JAPAN.

THE Japanese, as a race, are gradually attracting more and more attention all over the world, for, notwithstanding their former rigid exclusiveness, not only are they now admitting much of our western civilization into their own country, but numbers of their youth are constantly

being sent to Europe and the United States of America for educational purposes. Under these circumstances, and because for many centuries the character and habits of the nation have been to the outer world as a sealed book, we venture to hope that a brief account of some of their customs and usages, with respect to children, may not prove unacceptable to our readers.

A Japanese baby need be constitutionally strong, for it is by no means overdelicately nurtured; its mother frequently carries it out in the open-air in a state of complete nudity and with its head shaven. Amongst the lower orders, the women, when at work in the fields and on other occasions, may be seen with their infants fastened, almost like bundles, between their shoulders, so that they may be as little as possible in their way. In the houses they are left to their own devices much more than with us, and there is no need to be alarmed about their tumbling down-stairs, and eternally coming to grief against fenders, coal-boxes, mantelpieces, and similar objects of terror to a fond English mother, for such things do not exist in Japan. The thick mats, which constitute almost the only furniture of a Japanese house, are a splendid playground for the small atoms of humanity, for there they can roll and sprawl about to their hearts' delight, without any risk or fear of injury. There they play about with the fat pug dogs and tailless cats, without any restraint and to the great benefit of their tiny frames. They are freely supplied with toys and other infantine amusements, as Japanese parents have the reputation of being very kind to their offspring.

One curious custom in connection with a Japanese baby is that some of the clothes that it first wears are made from a girdle which its mother has worn previous to its birth, the material being dyed sky blue for the purpose. The *Record of Ceremonies*\* says that "twenty-four baby robes, twelve of silk and twelve of cotton, must be prepared (for the new comer); the hems must be dyed saffron colour;" and that when the child has been washed, "its body must be dried with a kerchief of fine cotton unhemmed." For the peace of mind of parents of moderate means, it is devoutly to be hoped that baby robes are less expensive in Japan than in England!

Accounts differ slightly as to when the Japanese baby receives its first name. Some say that it is on the seventh, while Humbert asserts that it is on the thirtieth day after its birth. According to the latter authority, there is no baptism of the child, properly so called; it is simply, in certain cases, presented in the temple, which its parents affect, and without any ceremony of purification. The father gives three names to the priest, and he writes them on separate pieces of paper, which are mixed together, and then, with certain incantatory forms, thrown up in the air. The first that falls is the chosen name. This is written out by the priest on consecrated paper and given to the child's parents to preserve. The priests, at these times, are usually very liberally dealt with by parents in the matter of presents, and they are expected to keep accurate registers of all the children who are thus presented in the temple. This is the only approach to a religious ceremony, in connection with the naming of a child. The occasion is celebrated by family visits and feasts, and the child receives certain presents, "among which," says Humbert, "two fans figure, in the case of a male, and a pot of pomade in that of a female child. The fans are precursors of swords, and the pomade is the presage of feminine charms. In both cases a packet of flax thread is added, signifying good wishes for a long life."

Mr. Mitford supplies a somewhat different version of the ceremony of naming a child; for he quotes a translation of a Japanese MS., which says that "on the seventh day after its birth, the child receives its name; the ceremony is called the congratulations of the seventh night. On this day some one of the relations of the family, who holds an exalted position, either from his rank or virtues, selects a name for the child, which name he keeps until the time of the cutting of the forelock, when he takes the name which he is to bear as a man. The second name is called the 'cap-name,' which is compounded of syllables taken from an old name of the family, and from the name of the sponsor. If the sponsor afterwards change his name, his name-child must also change his name."

According to ancient custom, baby clothes ought to be left off on the seventy-fifth or the hundred-and-twentieth day after birth, and at the latter date the child (in theory, though not in practice) is weaned. At the ceremony which takes place on this day, "if the child be a boy,

\* See Mitford's *Tales of Old Japan*. Vol. 2. Appendix.



it is fed by a gentleman of the family ; if a girl, by a lady." The account of the proceedings on this occasion, as given by the Japanese Record of Ceremonies, is decidedly amusing to the European mind, but is somewhat too long for quotation here.

When he is three years old, the Japanese infant is invested with a sword belt, and four years later with two diminutive swords, if he belong to the privileged class. The child's head is completely shaved until he is close upon four years old, and then three patches are grown, one at the back and one at each side. On this occasion the Record of Ceremonies ordains that "a large tray, on which are a comb, scissors, paper-string, a piece of string for tying the hair in a knot, cotton wool, and the bit of dried fish or seaweed which accompanies presents, one of each, and seven rice straws — these seven articles must be prepared." In another year's time the child is put into the loose trousers peculiar to the privileged class, and he is then presented with "a dress of ceremony, on which are embroidered storks and tortoises (emblems of longevity ; the stork is said to live a thousand years, the tortoise ten thousand), fir-trees (which being ever-green, and not changing their colour, are emblematic of an unchangingly virtuous heart), and bamboos (emblematic of an upright and straight mind.)" Soon after

the child has reached his fifteenth year, a fortunate day is chosen on which the forelock is cut off, and at this period, being considered a man, he is entrusted with swords of ordinary size ; and on this occasion in particular great family festivities and rejoicings take place in honour of the auspicious event. The lad then comes of age, and, casting away childish things, adopts the dress of a grown-up man in every particular. Japanese youths are said to be quite equal to the occasion, and, even at this early age, to adapt themselves most readily to the habits of manhood.

At the stages in his life which we have alluded to, the child has a sponsor, and certain wine-drinking customs and prescribed festivities have to be carefully attended to.

Some Japanese must have a string of names, awful to contemplate, if strict custom be always adhered to ; for, besides the name which he receives shortly after his birth, Humbert tells us that "he will take a second on attaining his majority, a third at his marriage, a fourth when he shall be appointed to any public function, a fifth when he shall ascend in rank or in dignity, and so on until the last, the name which shall be given him after his death, and inscribed upon his tomb — that by which his memory shall be held sacred from generation to generation."

SOMEBODY has been writing in one of the papers about the base sovereigns that are current — composed of platinum, and very hard to detect ; and he goes on to say : — "At present, if a man offers a false coin, having a similar false coin in his possession, the statute throws upon him the onus of satisfactorily proving his own innocence. But, if many of these false sovereigns are about, it is quite possible that an innocent man should have two of them in his possession at once. Indeed, the only practical advice of which the position admits is that we should never accept a sovereign in change, except from our bankers." What practical advice ! and what rich people we must all be ! Pray, how many per cent. of our respectable population have banking accounts ? We are reminded of the man in one of Mr. Gaskell's novels, who, out at dinner, was perfectly astounded that his hosts did not grow their own pineapples. "No pinery !" he said, in accents of condolence. Let us all join in pitying the man without a

banker ; and yet two or three do manage to live — and die — without his taking charge of their little all.

**AFFECTIVE FACULTIES.** — Having much of one of the affective faculties, we do not like to be exposed to the acute exercise of the same faculty in others. A person with large veneration shrinks from being an object of veneration to others. (To one with large self-esteem, the veneration of others is, on the contrary, agreeable.) One with large acquisitiveness detests being subjected to the action of powerful acquisitiveness in his neighbours. It has often been observed that individuals who are much given to jesting at the expense of their fellow-creatures cannot endure to be the subject of other people's jokes, and that great censurers and reprovers hate to be in the least rebuked or found fault with.